



## **Message from the Office of the State Minister for Veterans' Affairs Issue 70 (21 July, 2010)**

Please find below a message from Bill Denny AM, Director, Veterans SA for your information, distribution and possible use in newsletters, and on "Veterans" themed radio programs.

### **Fromelles Soldiers Laid to Rest**

Ninety-four years after the Battle of Fromelles, the last of 250 Australian and British soldiers recovered from Pheasant Wood have been buried with full military honours at a ceremony in France.

Minister Snelling encourages all South Australians to honour the sacrifice of these brave men, and notes that as a nation it is our duty is to ensure we reflect on the sacrifice of each and every person who has given his or her life in our name.

Fromelles was the first major battle fought by Australian troops on the Western Front. The battle has been described previously as the "bloodiest 24 hours in Australia's military history", the failed attack resulted in 5,533 Australian and 1,547 British soldiers being killed, wounded or taken prisoner.

Veterans SA is keen to acknowledge the sacrifice of South Australians who lost their lives at Fromelles in 1916.

Thus far, 14 South Australians have been identified, but there may be many more. Sadly, little information is held at a State level. Families often hold the key to this sort of tragedy and the Director of Veterans SA, Bill Denny AM invites all members of the veterans' community to pass on any information they may have on those lost, so that they and their families can be afforded appropriate recognition from a grateful State.

### **ANZAC Day Sporting Medals**

Planning is underway to expand the ANZAC Day Sporting Medals Program in 2011 to roughly 60 netball and football leagues around the State. This is a Veterans SA initiative, developed in partnership with the RSL, Netball SA and the South Australian Community Football League (S.A.C.F.L.).

The ANZAC Day Sporting Medals Program is an extension of the Peter Badcoe VC Medal awarded on the ANZAC Day weekend AFL match at AAMI Stadium. The program recognises prominent veterans from across South Australia.

The successful 2010 Pilot Program saw 10 Football and 10 Netball ANZAC Day Sporting Medals presented at venues selected by the S.A.C.F.L. & Netball SA. The medals were named after a serviceman and woman from the respective regions (selected by local R.S.L. Sub-branches).

2010 has also seen the awarding of the inaugural Vivian Bullwinkel ANZAC Day Medal to the player whose conduct and play best exemplified the ANZAC Spirit of skill, courage in adversity, self sacrifice, teamwork and fair play in the match between the Adelaide Thunderbirds and Southern Steel at ETSA Park on 11 April. It has been

pleasing that Netball SA has participated so enthusiastically in the program, thus allowing female veterans to be recognised in this way for the first time.

### **Inquiries into unresolved recognition issues for Royal Australian Air Force personnel who served at Ubon between 1965 and 1968**

The Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM MP, has announced that the independent Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal will inquire into unresolved recognition issues for Royal Australian Air Force personnel who served at Ubon, Thailand between 1965 and 1968.

Dr Kelly said: "This inquiry represents a continuation of reviews into long standing Defence honours and awards issues identified by the Government in 2007."

Calls for submissions will be released shortly in the national press. Submissions to the inquiry close on Monday, 30 August, 2010.

The terms of reference for the inquiry and guidance on how to make a submission can be obtained at: [www.defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au](http://www.defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au)

### **Recognition of SAS Counter Terrorist and Special Recovery Duties**

The Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, Dr Mike Kelly MP, has announced that the Commonwealth Government has accepted the recommendations of the independent Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal Inquiry into Recognition of Australian Defence Force Service for Special Air Service Counter Terrorist and Special Recovery Duties.

The Inquiry recommended that:

1. Service in an online Tactical Assault Group (TAG) since its inception in 1980 (as well as service in the Interim TAG in 1979) should be recognised by the award of the Australian Service Medal with a new clasp, to be entitled Clasp 'CT/SR'.
2. To be eligible for a medal, recipients should:
  - Have served in the online TAG for a minimum of 60 days continuously.
  - Have been a member of the TAG, which comprises a Regimental Special Operations Command and Control Element, signallers, intelligence staff and other specialists, a squadron or company headquarters as applicable, and land, water, sniper, and signals troops.
  - Have been a specialist member of the Australian Defence Force (eg Special Operations aviation personnel in support of the TAG), but only so long as they meet the requirement to serve continuously online for 60 days.

Defence is currently working through the implementation aspects and further information will be released about specific eligibility once deliberations have been finalised.

The full Report is available online at [www.defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au](http://www.defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au)

For more information about any of the items mentioned, please contact Veterans SA on 8226 8552.