



THE HON. DR MIKE KELLY AM MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support

Tuesday, 13 July 2010

36/10

Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal report – inquiry into recognition of unattached Australian performers in the Vietnam conflict

The Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, Dr Mike Kelly, today announced that the Government has accepted the recommendations of the independent Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal inquiry into recognition of unattached Australian performers in the Vietnam conflict.

The Report recommended:

1. Accept as correct a construction of paragraph 4(1)(b) of the Regulation to include service by an Australian performer, who was part of a 'private' concert tour that entertained Australian troops at an Australian base in Vietnam at the relevant time, as qualifying service for eligibility of the award of the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal (VLSM);
2. Accept a Statutory Declaration by an Australian performer who was part of a 'private' concert tour as a means of validating that performer's claim for the award of the VLSM. The Statutory Declaration should contain a declaration by the applicant of (a) the name of the concert tour of which he/she was part, (b) the dates on which the concert tour entertained Australian troops in Vietnam, and (c) the name of the Australian base where he/she performed on the dates in question;
3. Defence be directed to apply recommendations 1 and 2 in its assessment of applications by Australian performers who were part of a 'private' concert tour entertaining Australian troops in Vietnam during the relevant time'; and
4. Defence be directed to identify and review all applications from performers for the VLSM who had been part of a 'private' concert tour and whose applications were rejected by the Directorate of Honours and Awards. These reviews to be undertaken in accordance with recommendations 1 and 2 and if necessary Defence is to seek additional information from the applicant.

"The release of the findings fulfils an election commitment to review this service and the acceptance of the recommendations clearly demonstrates the Government's commitment to the independent review of long-standing Defence honours and awards issues," said Dr Kelly.

Defence will review the applications from Australian performers which were previously rejected, and where necessary will request applicants to provide additional information that may be required to validate their entitlement. Applicants who have changed their address in the period since their application was rejected by Defence, are requested to contact the Directorate of Honours and Awards with their current contact details.

Australian performers who entertained Australian military personnel on a private concert tour of Vietnam, and who believe they may now be entitled to the VLISM, are invited to make application to the Directorate of Honours and Awards. Application forms can be obtained from www.defence.gov.au/medals/ or by calling the Directorate of Honours and Awards, toll free, on 1800 111 321.

The Tribunal's full report is available at www.defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au. Further information on Defence honours and awards is available at: www.defence.gov.au/medals/

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