
Parliamentary Secretary for Defence – Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal public hearings continue in Sydney

6 February 2012

The Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, Senator David Feeney today announced that the Government initiated inquiry into the unresolved recognition for past acts of naval and military valour will resume its public hearings in Sydney this week (8 and 9 February).

“More than 50 witnesses are expected to have appeared before the independent Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal when it completes its public hearings in March.

“The Tribunal has already heard from a wide range of people at hearings held in Canberra, Melbourne and Launceston.

“Many of those witnesses have attested to the bravery shown by the 13 naval and military members the Government asked the Tribunal to examine.

“Their evidence has also underlined the practical challenges of looking back at decisions already made about honours and awards around events that occurred as far back as 1915,” Senator Feeney said.

The public hearings follow the Government direction last year that the Tribunal make recommendations on the eligibility of 13 naval and military members to be awarded the Victoria Cross, the Victoria Cross for Australia or other forms of appropriate recognition for their gallantry or valour.

The Tribunal is expected to report to the Government in the latter half of this year.

In addition to submissions relating to the 13 military members referred to the Tribunal by the Government, the Tribunal has received over 90 submissions relating to 51 other military personnel.

The Tribunal will not examine these submissions as part of its current inquiry but they will be referred to the Government for consideration in due course.

The Inquiry’s Terms of Reference can be found at <http://www.minister.defence.gov.au/2011/04/16/parliamentary-secretary-for-defence-victoria-cross-inquiry/>

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