



**The Hon Dan Tehan MP**  
Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister for Defence Personnel  
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Cyber Security  
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC

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MC17-002375

Senator Brian Burston  
Senator for New South Wales  
43-43A The Boulevard  
TORONTO NSW 2283

Dear Senator Burston

*Djian,*

Thank you for your letters of 14 August 2017 and 13 September 2017 regarding the classification of the service of members of Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB) in Malaysia in the period 1970 to 1989.

The Department of Defence has concluded its examination of the documents and records you provided. While there are some which had not previously been seen by Defence, as they were not correspondence addressed to or created by Defence, I am satisfied with the Department's advice that there is no new evidence presented which would warrant another independent inquiry.

I am also satisfied that, in their rebuttal of the Defence Honours and Awards Review Tribunal Inquiry Into recognition For Members of Rifle Company Butterworth For Service in Malaysia Between 1970 and 1989, the RCB Review Group identified no errors in fact and have presented no new evidence. As I indicated in our meeting on 19 June 2017, I have the utmost faith in the Tribunal and its examination of this matter.

I note that the Prime Minister has also responded to your letter and has confirmed that he is comfortable with the position which has been reached. Australian Defence Force (ADF) service at Butterworth, including RCB service, is appropriately classified as peacetime service and appropriately recognised by the award of the Australian Service Medal (ASM) 1945-1975 with Clasp 'SE ASIA' and ASM with Clasp 'SE ASIA', depending upon the period of service in Butterworth.

Defence is committed to ensuring that the service of all ADF members is appropriately recognised. Defence has been diligent in undertaking an extensive and comprehensive examination of available evidence to ensure an accurate and balanced perspective on ADF service at Butterworth during the period 1970 to 1989.

The service of all ADF personnel who served at Butterworth during the period 1970 to 1989 (9000 with the rifle companies and 19 000 with the Royal Australian Air Force) has and will always be valued by Defence for the contribution to the security of Australia's national interests.

I also commend you for your ongoing interest in and support of our veterans. While this is not the outcome sought by the RCB Review Group, I believe Defence has done all it can to resolve this matter, and as such I consider that further correspondence is unwarranted.

Yours sincerely



Dan Tehan

20 NOV 2017