



Australian Government

Department of Defence

MC18-000180, MC18-000235, MC18-000447
VCDF/OUT/2018/97

Mr Robert Cross
4/15 Gardiner Street
ALDERLEY QLD 4051

Dear Mr Cross

Robert

Thank you for your letter of 27 January 2018 to the Minister for Defence, your letter of 02 February 2018 to the Attorney-General, and your email and enclosed letter of 02 February 2018 to Minister McCormack, about recognition of the service of Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB), during the period 1970 to 1989, and your request for an independent inquiry. The matter has been passed to Minister Chester as the portfolio Minister responsible, who has asked me to respond on his behalf.

The Department of Defence is committed to ensuring that the service of all ADF members is appropriately recognised. The Department has been diligent in undertaking an extensive and comprehensive examination of information provided by claimants, and evidence which the Department has located through its own research, to ensure an accurate and balanced perspective on ADF service at Butterworth during the period, 1970 to 1989.

As you will be aware, since 2006 the RCB Review Group and its members have provided numerous submissions concerning RCB service at Air Base Butterworth during the period, 1970 to 1989. On each occasion the Department of Defence, or an independent review, has comprehensively examined the information provided by yourself, or members who have sought to represent the Group, and determined the claims to be un-founded. In this latest round of submissions there is no new evidence provided.

Therefore, consistent with the findings of previous independent reviews, and with the position of successive Coalition and Labor Governments, I consider that all ADF service at Butterworth, including RCB service, remains appropriately classified as peacetime service. Further, as RCB service has already been examined by several independent reviews, I am satisfied that further consideration of the classification of ADF service in Malaysia is not warranted.

Importantly, the service of ADF members who served at Butterworth during the period 1970 to 1989, is recognised by the award of the Australian Service Medal (ASM) 1945-1975, with Clasp 'SE ASIA' or ASM with Clasp 'SE ASIA', depending upon the period of service at Butterworth. This service will always be valued by Defence and the Government for the contribution to the security of Australia's national interests.

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While this is not the outcome sought by you or the Review Group, the Department has done all that it can to address the matters raised in regard to RCB service during the period, 1970 to 1989, and further correspondence on this matter is unwarranted.

I thank you for your military service.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'R.J. Griggs', with a stylized flourish at the end.

R.J. GRIGGS, AO, CSC
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Vice Chief of the Defence Force

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