



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Patron-in-Chief: His Excellency General The Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)

NATIONAL OFFICE

PO Box 4166

KINGSTON ACT 2604

20 August 2018

The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP

Prime Minister of Australia

PO Box 6022

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

The ongoing saga of the recognition of warlike (Qualifying Service) for the members of Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB) during the period 1970 to 1989 warrants consideration and adjudication by an independent arbitrator.

Sadly, the perception now exists that pre-conceived judgements have played an undue influence on the decision to deny recognition to date. The RCB served at a time that is colloquially referred to as the 'peace-years'. The term 'peace-years' contradict the reality of the time as this was during the height of the 'cold war' and when the communist insurgency was on-going in what is now Malaysia.

Governments of both political persuasions took decisions during the period in question to, in their mind, best serve the nations diplomatic and defence interests of the times. Evidence gathered by the RCB suggests that these decisions were classified knowingly to convey a level of security that was contrary to concerns of the times. Some have referred to this period as having had a 'cone of silence' purposely placed over the deployment of the RCB. This surely indicates that a review of the new evidence warrants further investigation.

The Defence Force Welfare Association calls on the Government to appoint an independent arbitrator to review the recognition of the RCB during the period 1970 to 1989 as warlike or Qualifying Service.

Yours sincerely,

Kel Ryan

National President

Defence Force Welfare Association

CC: The Hon Darren Chester MP – Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Senator the Hon Marise Payne – Minister for Defence

The Hon Richard Marles MP – Shadow Minister for Defence

The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP – Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Vice Admiral David L. Johnston, AO - Vice Chief of the Defence Force