



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

A member of the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO)*

MONTHLY UPDATE #267 – 15 December 2011

UPDATE is a monthly e-letter produced by the Defence Force Welfare Association containing current items of interest to the Service and ex-Service communities. It is widely distributed to Members of Parliament, media outlets, senior Service and Public Service Officers, DFWA members and supporters.

DFWA POLICY PRIORITIES

The Association recently held its AGM and discussed amongst other things the priority issues the Association will concentrate on in the coming year. They are:

1. Military Superannuation - Fair Go Campaign
2. Development of an Australian Military Covenant
3. ADF Remuneration issues - the *Total Employment Offer*
4. Release of Service Records
5. Jet Fuel Study
6. Military Court
7. Military Superannuation - Remaining Issues
8. Defence Housing (in major cities)
9. DFWA Membership Growth

NON-CUSTODIAL DEFENCE PARENTS DESERVE SUPPORT

The Association wonders why currently separated non-custodial defence parents are not recognised as having dependants within current Defence categorisations.

Currently they are they are classified as *Member without Dependants*, and as a result, entitlements that exist to support the families of members with Defence recognised dependants are not accessible to them. These members are then faced with increased pressure to choose between family and service lifestyle, with very little support provided to them.

The Association supports the call of the Defence Families Australia to provide non custodial defence parents some level of appropriate support.

DID WE HEAR RIGHT MR SHORTEN ?

The Association congratulates Bill Shorten to his elevation to the Cabinet and appointment, amongst other things, as the Minister for Financial Services and Superannuation. Interestingly Mr Shorten recently advised Perth radio listeners that the “right of every Australian” is to choose his or her superannuation scheme company.

Pardon Mr Shorten ?

Aren't those who wear the uniform of the ADF classified as Australians ? If so, why are they excluded from this right?

COMSUPER GETS IT RIGHT AND GETS IT WRONG !

In its recent publication *Militarysuper Book* dated 30 June 2011, Comsuper makes the statement on page 4 that.....“.. (military) pensions are subject to full CPI updating every six months (ensuring that \$1 in 2011 will be equivalent to \$1 in 2028)”.

- right, because pensions are indeed subject to CPI updating every six months;
- right, because the statement reflects the intent of military superannuation pensions that the pensions should maintain purchasing power;
- wrong, because CPI indexation does neither of the above ! Quite simply, the value of the military superannuation pension in 2028 will NOT have the same purchasing power as it has in 2011.

This seemingly innocent comment reflects the mischievous untruths – be they innocent (being based on ignorance) or purposely spruiked by the Government and the bureaucracy – that those involved in the fair indexation debate have to deal with.

.... AND SO DOES THE TREASURER !!

The Treasurer, the Hon Wayne Swan MP is to be congratulated in getting it right when he recently said that Australians, through their hard work, are entitled to a dignified retirement.

This contrasts with how he and the Government get it so wrong when they ignore the right of retired members of the ADF to have exactly that – a dignified retirement.

The Association looks forward to the Government providing members of the ADF fair indexation – as is provided to aged pensions - to their hard earned (and paid for) military superannuation pension.

Will 2012 be the year ?

NEW WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

The Association has some concern – maybe misguided - about the new “harmonised” Workplace Health and Safety regulations that are now coming into force. As the ADF will not be exempt from these new arrangements, there will probably be an impact on ADF individuals who are likely to face additional personal liabilities in the normal course of their duties. The Association will maintain a watching brief on the issue.

The new regulations also have an impact on volunteer organisations such as DFWA particularly if they have even one part time paid employee. The new arrangements will probably impose greater administrative burdens and more stringent levels of compliance on organisations which will be problematic for organisations staffed by volunteers to provide a range of community based support services.

The Association will examine this matter, particularly as how it may impact insurance and the ability to recruit and retain volunteers.



***THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION
WISH YOU ALL THE VERY BEST FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW
YEAR.***

THE NEXT UPDATE IS SCHEDULED FOR MID FEBRUARY 2012

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*ADSO comprises the Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA), the Naval Association of Australia (NAA), the RAAF Association (RAAFA), The Royal Australian Regiment Corporation (RARAC) and the Australian Special Air Service Association (ASASA).