



Media Release

The Hon Alan Griffin MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

VA059

Friday 27 June 2008

GRIFFIN CALLS ON VETERANS TO PUT THEIR BEST VOICE FORWARD

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, is travelling to each state seeking the views of veterans on the best way to give them a more effective voice at the highest levels of government.

Minister Griffin said meetings to be held nation-wide would discuss the structure and role of the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters—a key election commitment.

“More than 100 individuals and organisations from all around Australia responded to a discussion paper on the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters released earlier this year,” Mr Griffin said.

“Their submissions demonstrate very strong support for the Advisory Council and its role, but have raised issues that need further discussion.

“During the parliamentary recess I will be travelling to meet veterans in every state and territory to discuss these issues in person.

“There are a number of options on the table, including membership, appointment of the chair, how matters are referred to the Council, how it should operate and how it relates to my Department.

“The Government is also reviewing all consultation mechanisms between the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the broader defence and ex-service communities. This will also be discussed at the meetings.

“I want to ensure the Council meets the needs of veterans and current and former serving members before its establishment later this year. These consultation meetings with veterans and the veteran community are essential to achieve that goal.

“I expect there will be a range of opinions and robust discussion, but I know that we all share a common goal of looking out for the best interests of all those who have served Australia in uniform.

“I encourage all veterans and members of the veteran community interested in the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council to attend the meetings and contribute to the discussion.

“Following this round of consultation I intend to appoint the Advisory Council by the end of August.”

Meetings will be held in each capital city during July and early August. Further details of meetings and copies of submissions, are available at <http://minister.dva.gov.au/PMAC/index.htm>

Media inquiries: Laura Ryan 0437 863 109