



Media Release

The Hon Alan Griffin MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Catherine King MP
Member for Ballarat

VA060

Friday 27 June 2008

WAR MEMORIALS OUTSIDE CANBERRA TO BE RECOGNISED BALLARAT POW MEMORIAL TO BE FIRST

Parliament has now passed legislation that will allow memorials outside Canberra to be recognised as National Memorials. The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, said the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial at Ballarat would be the first to receive such recognition.

"The passage of this legislation delivers on an election commitment made by this Government and I'd like to acknowledge the work done by the Member for Ballarat, Catherine King, in bringing it to fruition," Mr Griffin said.

"The Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial, built by the people of Ballarat, is a great tribute to the suffering and survival of Australian prisoners of war.

"Once the bill receives Royal Assent, I will write to the Prime Minister and inform him that I am satisfied that the Ballarat memorial meets the criteria for consideration under the legislation and seek his agreement to declare the memorial a National Memorial," Mr Griffin said.

The Member for Ballarat, Catherine King, said, "As this legislation has passed the Parliament, the people of Ballarat and the ex-prisoners of war community are another step closer to having their memorial recognised as a National Memorial.

"I understand that once the Bill is given Royal Assent, the formal process to recognise the Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial will be completed as soon as possible.

"I would like to recognise the Ballarat RSL, the Ex-Prisoners of War Association, and the City and people of Ballarat for their tireless efforts – their hard work is the real reason this monument will be recognised nationally," Ms King said.

Mr Griffin said that Australia had many fine war memorials that represented and commemorated the service and sacrifice of our fighting men and women, but cautioned that approval to be listed as a National Memorial would not be given to all memorials.

"There are strict eligibility criteria that memorials must meet before being considered under this legislation," he said.

"The eligibility criteria include the requirements that a memorial must be of an appropriate scale, design and standard, and be dignified and symbolic. It must be a memorial for the sole purpose of commemorating a significant aspect of Australia's wartime history and have a major role in community commemorations.

"Also, the memorial must be owned or managed by an authority at the state, territory or local government level and be maintained by that authority."

Mr Griffin said that if local, state or territory governments who were responsible for a war memorial felt that it was eligible for national status, they were welcome to make an application for consideration.

Following Royal Assent, which will take at least two weeks, guidelines will be published on www.dva.gov.au to assist organisations seeking to undertake this process.

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