



Media Release

The Hon Alan Griffin MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

VA071

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WHAT ARE THE VIEWS OF NSW VETERANS?

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, will be in Sydney this Friday seeking the views of local veterans on the best way to give them a more effective voice at the highest levels of government.

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

“More than 400 veterans have come to share their views with me at my consultations so far, and I expect a big turn out in Sydney,” Mr Griffin said.

More than 100 individuals and organisations from all around Australia responded to a discussion paper on the Advisory Council released earlier this year, including 28 from New South Wales.

“This impressive response has demonstrated very strong support for the Advisory Council and its role, but has also raised issues that need further discussion.

“During the parliamentary recess I am travelling to meet veterans in every state and territory to discuss these issues in person. I'm looking forward to hearing from the many effective voices of the New South Wales ex-service and veteran communities.

“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 Friday's meeting.

“I want to ensure the Council meets the needs of veterans and ex-service personnel before it's established 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 share the goal of looking out for the best interests of all those who have served Australia in uniform.

“I encourage all those interested in the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council to attend the meeting and contribute to the discussion.

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

The meeting is on Friday 25 July 2008 from 10.00am to 12.00pm at Tower B, Centennial Plaza, 280 Elizabeth St Surry Hills. Further details of meetings and copies of submissions are available at minister.dva.gov.au/PMAC/index.htm.

Meeting RSVPs: 02 9213 7180

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