

MEDIA RELEASE



The Hon. De-Anne Kelly, MP
Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence

007/05

Friday, 11 March 2005

RAAF Ubon veterans praised for service

The Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence, De-Anne Kelly, has today praised the service of former RAAF personnel who served at RAAF base Ubon, Thailand.

Mrs Kelly made the comment after releasing the findings of an independent review panel on *Vietnam Campaign Recognition for RAAF Service at Ubon 25 June 1965 – 31 August 1968*.

This Review, chaired by Air Marshal D.J. Riding AO, DFC (Retired), was established in June 2004 to review evidence presented to Government by the RAAF Ubon Recognition and Reunion Group that justification may exist to extend eligibility for the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal for RAAF service in Ubon Thailand between 25 June 1965 – 31 August 1968.

The committee has recommended the award of the Vietnam Medal for RAAF service at Ubon. It has not made any recommendations concerning the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal.

Mrs Kelly said the criteria for the Vietnam Medal and the Vietnam Logistics Support Medal are clear (see below).

“Regrettably, RAAF Ubon personnel were neither established in, nor operating within the recognised boundaries of the conflict,” Mrs Kelly said.

“Central to the consideration of this issue was whether these personnel served within the boundaries of the area of operations. This criteria has been applied consistently and rigourously in every case.

“While their service is highly valued and has been appropriately recognised, the conditions for the award of either medal has not been met.”

Mrs Kelly acknowledged the Ubon Reunion Recognition Group has pursued this issue for many years with sincerity in seeking further recognition.

“These former RAAF personnel have been recognised by the Government for their service at Ubon,” Mrs Kelly said.

They have been awarded the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp “Thailand” and the Returned from Active Service Badge. Veterans’ status has also been accorded to them under the *Veterans Entitlement Act 1986*.

In addition, many of these personnel may have been awarded the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp "Thailand" for service in Ubon prior to 25 June 1965.

The report will be available soon on the Defence Honours and Awards web page at:
www.defence.gov.au/dpe/dpe_site/honours_awards/

Criteria for Vietnam Medal and Vietnam Logistics Support Medal:

The criteria for the Vietnam Medal and the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal are clear:

Vietnam Medal

- Service of 28 days, continuous or aggregated, in ships or craft employed in operations on inland waters or off the coast of Vietnam;
- Service of one day or more on the posted strength of a unit or formation on land in Vietnam;
- One operational sortie over Vietnam or Vietnamese waters by aircrew on the posted strength of a unit allocated for direct support of operations in Vietnam; or
- Service of 30 days, continuous or aggregated for official visits, inspections or other occurrences of a temporary nature on duty in Vietnam, or in ships or craft engaged in operations off the Vietnamese coast.

Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal

The Medal may be awarded for service of one day or more in the area of operations in Vietnam during the relevant period (29 May 1964 to 27 January 1973):

- As a member of the crew of a ship or aircraft operating in support of the Australian Armed Forces; or
- While attached to a unit or organisation operating in support of the Australian Armed Forces; or
- While attached to, or serving with, a unit of the Australian Armed Forces or allied forces as an observer.

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