

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY AND PRINCIPLES

2.1 In a task such as the Post-Armistice Korean Service Review, it is helpful to the Working Party and to those who make use of the Report to have available a methodology (or approach to the Review) and the principles guiding the work of the Review. A statement of methodology gives confidence to those reading the report that the approach to the Review has been properly structured. A process linking methodology and principles is that it is prudent to clear principles with the authority tasking the review to ensure that there is a shared perception of what the Review is seeking to achieve.

Objective

2.2 To recommend to the Minister how those Australian Servicemen and women who served in post-Armistice Korea should be recognised in terms of awards of service medals within the Australian Honours and Awards System; whether they should be awarded the Returned from Active Service Badge; and how those who died during this service should be honoured.

Methodology

2.3 The Working Party noted the requirement to include the nature of operations and hostilities in determining the nature of service during the period under review. Since 'nature of service' is a term introduced since the Korean War, there would have been no defined 'nature of service' for Korea. The Working Party therefore decided that the essentials of the Review are to examine the criteria of eligibility for the Australian Active Service Medal and the Returned from Active Service Badge and to determine whether these criteria of eligibility have been met by the conditions and experience of those who served in Korea after the 27 July 1953 Armistice. Here it is necessary to take note of what the Government had in mind when it established new medals, even though the definitions and criteria of eligibility may not be clear in the light of more recent determinations.

2.4 In this process it will be necessary to identify words, which are defined and used in other contexts of military service, to determine the appropriateness of the use of the same words as criteria of eligibility. The term 'active service' in particular requires careful examination. A legal advising was sought (see Chapter 6 and Appendix 7).

2.5 The methodology needs to establish through research and submissions, tested through evidence at public hearings, the circumstances under which sailors, soldiers and airmen served in Korea after the Armistice and their physical and mental experience.

2.6 Tasks included:

- a. researching a range of material, including the reports of relevant reviews, contemporary records, the evolution of current service awards and the nature of service;
- b. determining areas of consultation, including legal advice and centres of expertise such as the National Archives of Australia, the Australian War Memorial, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Office of Australian War Graves, specialist historians, Defence Honours and Awards, and overseas sources;
- c. establishing contact to give notice of the Review to stakeholders through media releases, advertisements in national newspapers, letters and personal approaches;
- d. inviting all stakeholders to prepare submissions and to give evidence at public hearings; and
- e. conducting public hearings around Australia and creating a documentary record of the evidence given.

Principles

2.7 The Working Party established the following principles to guide its deliberations:

- a. Australia has an obligation to recognise its Servicemen and women through service medals appropriate to the nature of the service and the conditions experienced for the deployments to which they were assigned.
- b. The Review needs to be aware that, in the light of the complexity and variety of deployments of Australia's armed forces since the Second World War, definitions and conditions of eligibility for service medals may not have an enduring relevance to the strategic circumstances and in-theatre conditions of later deployments.
- c. The Review needs to have in mind the interests of those who served in Korea before the Armistice as well as the interests of those who served after the Armistice.
- d. The Review should attempt to achieve stability for any future award of service medals; and consistency with those already awarded under the Imperial Honours and Awards System and the Australian Honours and Awards System.
- e. The Review must take note of what the Government had in mind when it established new service medals, even though the definitions and criteria of eligibility may not be clear in the light of more recent determinations.

- f. Australia's strategic and national circumstances, and in-theatre physical and mental conditions, have changed since the more conventional battlefield environment of the Second World War. The Review therefore needs to be prepared to challenge accepted definitions of the nature of service.
- g. The Review should take note of, but not necessarily seek to achieve, the same recognition as service medals awarded by other UN Command countries, particularly those with which Australia was closely associated in Korea, notably the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Canada and the United States of America; and particularly the criteria of eligibility, such as in-theatre conditions and situations, noting also that medals awarded by these countries will reflect different national cultures of service recognition.
- h. The Review should examine the changing nature of service through the period under review, in order to evaluate the service against recognition criteria.
- i. The Review should take account of the importance of recognition as a factor of morale of the present-day Defence Force and the peace of mind of veterans of all ages and deployments.
- j. The Review should be cognisant of principles established by previous reviews.

