



REPORT OF THE

**POST-ARMISTICE
KOREAN SERVICE REVIEW**

DECEMBER 2005



Australian Government
Post-Armistice Korean Service Review

Honours and Awards
T-4-11
Department of Defence
CANBERRA ACT 2600

The Honourable De-Anne Kelly BE, MP
Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

We are pleased to present the report of the independent Review which you established on 14 June 2005 into the level of recognition of service following the Armistice in Korea in 1953.

As required by our Terms of Reference, we have consulted widely with veterans, their associations and other relevant parties. In keeping with our commitment to find an appropriate outcome to issues of concern, we have also extended the Review to consider how those who died during this service should be honoured.

We have conducted the Review in a way that was open, public and impartial. We have not prejudged any issue, and for the thoroughness of our Review we have pursued all reasonable options.

We would like to thank all those who have assisted the Review for their time and contributions.

Yours sincerely

Ian Crawford
Rear Admiral AO, AM (Mil), RAN (Retd)

Garry Nehl AM

Co-Chairs

Gordon Jones AM
Brigadier (Retd)

Colleen Thurgar AM

Members

20 December 2005

Transmittal letter

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MEMBERS OF THE WORKING PARTY

The Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence (the Honourable De-Anne Kelly BE, MP) appointed as Co-Chairs of the Working Party for the Review:

- Rear Admiral Ian Crawford AO, AM (Mil), RAN (Retd); and
- Mr Garry Nehl AM.

As members of the Working Party for the Review, the Minister appointed:

- Ms Colleen Thurgar AM; and
- Brigadier Gordon Jones AM (Retd).

Members of the Working Party

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The working party is to investigate, review and report on the level of recognition of Australian service in Korea between 28 July 1953 and 26 August 1957, following the armistice.

The working party is to make specific recommendations concerning the appropriateness of the award of the *Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75* with clasp 'Korea' and the *Returned from Active Service Badge* for this period of service.

The determination of the nature of service during this period is to include the nature of operations and hostilities.

Without being limited by those prescribed, the deliberations and recommendations of the following source references are to be considered in the conduct of the review:

- The 1993/94 Committee into Defence and Defence Related Awards (Gration Review);
- The 2002/03 Independent Review of Veterans' Entitlements (Clarke Review);
- The 1975 Independent Enquiry into the Repatriation System (Toose Report);
- The 2000 Review of Service Entitlement Anomalies in respect of South-East Asian Service 1955-75 (Mohr Report);
- The Mortality Study 2003: Australian Veterans of the Korean War and the 2005 Korean War Veterans Health Study;
- Past and current precedents; and
- Past and current Government policy.

In presenting recommendations, the working party shall include written consideration of the wider implications of suggested changes to current policy.

The working party is to consult widely with veterans organizations, government authorities and other interested parties.

De-Anne Kelly

14 June 2005

Terms of Reference

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report addresses the outcome of the Post-Armistice Korean Service Review. The Review was undertaken in accordance with the wish of the Honourable De-Anne Kelly BE, MP, in her capacity as Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence, to be advised on the level of recognition of Australian service in Korea between 28 July 1953 and 26 August 1957, following the Armistice.
2. On 14 June 2005 the Minister appointed Rear Admiral Ian Crawford AO, AM (Mil) RAN Retd and Mr Garry Nehl AM as Co-Chairmen, and Brigadier Gordon Jones AM Retd and Ms Colleen Thurgar AM as members of the Working Party to make specific recommendations concerning the appropriateness of the award of the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with clasp 'KOREA' and the Returned from Active Service Badge for this period of service.
3. The Minister directed that a number of source references and past and current precedents; and past and current Government policy were to be considered in the conduct of the Review.
4. The Working Party took as its objective 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 campaign and operational medals within the Australian Honours and Awards System; whether they should be awarded the Returned from Active Service Badge; and, taking note of her wish that the Working Party should interpret the Terms of Reference freely, how those who died during this service should be commemorated.
5. The approach to the Review was a combination of consultation and research. Notices were placed in major metropolitan newspapers and a local newspaper for the region where veterans advocating recognition were located; and letters were written to veteran associations with Korean service membership calling for written submissions. Later notices were placed in the same newspapers and letters were written to those who had made submissions providing information about public hearings.
6. These public hearings were programmed to take account of the interest in the Review demonstrated by the submissions. They were held in Canberra, all State capitals and Nowra, NSW and those giving evidence were veterans of both the combat period of the Korean War and also the post-Armistice Korean service period, as well as government officials representing the views of the Department of Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Unsolicited comment after the public hearings gave the impression that the conduct of the hearings generally was welcomed by the veterans participating.
7. The Working Party was at pains to stress throughout the hearings processes that the Review was independent and would be open, public and impartial. It was also made clear that, collectively and individually, the Working Party had not prejudged any issue, and for the thoroughness of the Review would pursue all options.

8. From submissions the Working Party was aware of the variety of views on the issues to be addressed and the different recollections of events and conditions experienced 50 years ago. In order to reach an objective opinion on the way conditions experienced related to criteria of eligibility for recognition it was necessary to consult contemporary records. The need for objectivity was reinforced by the recognition of the importance of the interests of veterans of the combat period of the Korean War as much as those of the post-armistice Korean service period.

9. Some records were found amongst Australian archival material in a variety of Australian sources but, in the light of the way Australian units were located in higher formation structures of the United Nations Command it was recognised at an early stage of the Review that it would be necessary to access archival material from British and US sources. The access processes from the different international sources were complex and time-consuming but the outcome was rewarding and helpful to the perceptions that influenced the conclusions of the Review. In addition the Working Party now has custody of records relevant to the period under review, some of which have not been evaluated even in the country of origin. This should be an important contribution to Australian archival material for the Australian Korean service experience.

10. At the outset the Working Party was aware of the way the advocates of recognition relied on interpretations of legislation and terms used in a range of official documents to confer the recognition they sought. For this reason it was necessary to obtain a legal advising on the relevance of the referenced legislation and terms and this has contributed to the outcome of the Review.

11. In addition the examination of earlier reviews and inquiries, although not directed to the matters under consideration in this Review, included principles and judgements that have guided the Working Party in its deliberations.

12. The outcome of the Review is encapsulated in Chapter 10 (Conclusions) and in the list of recommendations which follows this Executive Summary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Below is a list of all the recommendation of this Review, in the order of the chapters in which they appear. The recommendation number identifies the chapter and serial letter within that chapter.

Chapter 7, Case for Medal and Badge Recognition

Recommendation

- 7A. The Working Party recommends that the AASM 1945–75 should not be awarded for post-Armistice service in Korea.
- 7B. The Working Party recommends that the Australian Government should be advised to proceed to establish conditions of eligibility for the award of a newly-instituted Australian General Service Medal for Korea for service in Korea during the period from 28 July 1953 until 19 April 1956 with a period of eligibility of 30 days in the prescribed operation.
- 7C. The Working Party recommends the demanding service in Korea during the period from 28 July 1953 to 19 April 1956 warrants recognition by the Returned from Active Service Badge.

Chapter 8, Broader Policy Options relating to the Award of Medals

Recommendation:

- 8A. The Department of Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs should work closely together to raise public awareness of the clear distinction between medals eligibility and veterans' entitlements. This could be achieved in plain English information to explain the workings of the conditions of service package and the relationship between elements of the package, to include veterans' entitlements and medals.
- 8B. The Department of Defence should examine options for modifying the medal system's rule-making and making it more transparent and reviewable for the future. In this process it should produce more plain English material to explain it.
- 8C. An independent part-time military honours tribunal should be established.

Chapter 9, Commemoration of those who died

- 9A. The Working Party recommends that it should be accepted that the inclusion on the Roll of Honour at the Australian War Memorial of the names of those who died in post-Armistice Korean service is not within the current criteria of the Australian War Memorial, and that it is not feasible to change these criteria.

9B. The Working Party recommends that:

- a. consideration should be given to a national plaque with the names of all Australian Servicemen who died in post-Armistice Korean service and are buried and commemorated overseas but not on the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour, to be established in the AWM Sculpture Garden in Canberra, with Commonwealth Government and veteran support;
- b. the Department of Veterans' Affairs should update the Nominal Roll for the Korean War to record the deaths of those who died in post-Armistice service; and
- c. further research should be undertaken with a view to identifying how to appropriately recognise in Australia those Servicemen and women who have been buried and commemorated overseas and are not currently recognised in Australia.

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Introduction

1. This Report examines and makes recommendations on the appropriate level of recognition of Australian post-Armistice service in Korea, in accordance with the Terms of Reference given to the Working Party by the Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence (see page ix).
2. It is important to appreciate that the Working Party has had access to information, much of which has not seen the light of day for over 50 years. Certainly it has never been, and probably never will be again, brought together for the purpose for which this Review was tasked. The circumstances reported are exceptional. No one person and no authority could have been expected to reach conclusions or make recommendations that this Working Party has been able to achieve, unless they had been tasked to do so, and had had access to the research material of this Review. We have been privileged to address a phenomenon of armed forces history that so often has been overlooked through attitudes and a focus on perceived priorities of the day.
3. The period reviewed by the Working Party has many unusual features, some unique to the record of Australia's involvement in overseas operations. At a time of heightened tension between the power blocs confronting each other in the Cold War, there was an uncertain truce in the Korean War with massive forces facing each other across a demilitarised zone, readied to meet, but in the case of the United Nations Command forces, uncertain about the likelihood of a renewal of hostilities. Other unusual factors in Australia's deployment of forces included the way that Australia had engaged Servicemen to meet the operational commitment and the conditions of service offered.
4. When it came to recognition of service, Australia (as with many other countries of the British Commonwealth) was in the shadow of the Second World War and its standards of service recognition. When the time came for a closer review of recognition of past operations—and this has happened in all Commonwealth countries—new regimes of awards and campaign medals in Australia had created an intractable position whereby access to an appropriate medal was no longer possible and an easy solution would have been to find that recognition was no longer possible. This outcome would not have done justice to the Servicemen and women involved and the conditions they experienced. It has become a challenge to the Working Party and those in government to seek to use existing authorities with some flexibility to meet the circumstances.

Chapter 1 of this Report sets out the background to the Review and summarises the main outcomes sought by the various participants in the process.

Chapter 2 is a statement of the principles and methodology which the Working Party developed to guide its deliberations, drawing on the work of earlier reviews as appropriate.

Chapter 3 summarises the history of the relevant medals and badges for the various operational deployments from the Second World War to date. This is important in setting the scene and establishing the precedents for medal and badge recognition.

Chapter 4 is a summary and analysis of the findings of relevant earlier reviews in relation to post-Armistice service in Korea. Most of these earlier reviews are mentioned in the Terms of Reference for this Review.

Chapter 5 is a key section of the Report which examines afresh the conditions experienced in post-Armistice Korean service from original documents. Relatively little has been written about this period by other authors. The Working Party undertook an intensive research program to find out from contemporary sources about conditions experienced by our land, sea and air forces in the Korean theatre between 1953 and 1957.

In the command structure in Korea, Australian units were committed to formations within the UN Command. For all three Australian Services, these higher command formations were British and American. The chain of command led to the British Far East Fleet, the US I Corps/8th Army through the 1 British Commonwealth Division, or the USAF 4th Fighter Interceptor Wing/5th Air Force.

The Working Party sought original research material from overseas sources in order to gain a further understanding of the conditions experienced, through threat assessments, rules of engagement and operational reports at the level of these higher command formations. On completion of this Review, this original research material not previously available in Australia will be deposited with the Australian War Memorial.

In addition, the Working Party and Secretariat examined hundreds of original source documents within Australia, with the expert help of the information services staff at the Australian War Memorial, the National Archives of Australia and the Parliamentary Library. These documents included unit reports, Government and Parliamentary proceedings, files, military records, transcripts of interviews, maps and photographs. Much of this information had not been seen by previous researchers.

The Working Party also appreciated the first-hand accounts of service in Korea from the many veterans of all three Services who provided submissions and gave evidence at public hearings. We thank them for giving us the benefit of their research and experience. The lists of submissions and witnesses are at Appendices 3 and 4.

Maps and special map overlays illustrating the Korean theatre and the Australian areas of operations post-Armistice are in Annex 5B at the end of this Chapter. Some of the overlays are taken from unpublished contemporary sketch maps made in the field.

Photographs illustrating post-Armistice activities and the conditions experienced by post-Armistice Australian forces are reproduced in Annex 5C at the end of this Chapter, with the kind permission of the Australian War Memorial.

The books and reports which the Working Party consulted are listed in **Appendix 9, Bibliography**.

Chapter 6 addresses the legal issues raised by several veterans and their representatives. This Chapter draws on the legal advice provided to the Working Party by Professor Robin Creyke, the full text of which is at **Appendix 7**.

Chapter 7 is the critical development of the argument for medal and badge recognition for post-Armistice veterans. The Working Party is aware that some veterans have raised the matter of flow-on of eligibility for the Infantry Combat Badge. This matter is outside the terms of reference and is better left to the administrative processes within Army.

Chapter 8 explores some broader policy options drawn from the Review, relating to the system of campaign awards.

Chapter 9 extends the Review to consider how those who died during post-Armistice service should be honoured. Although not specifically mentioned in the Terms of Reference, the Working Party was satisfied that it had sufficient authority from the Minister to address the many concerns quite properly expressed by veterans in submissions and evidence on this important issue. We are confident that this Chapter gives a definitive account of the final resting places and existing commemoration of the dead. We go on to propose initiatives which we hope will bring some comfort to surviving relatives, friends and the veteran community.

Chapter 10 summarises the conclusions of the Working Party on the issues put before it.

References to this Working Party

5. In order to identify the work of this Review from other reviews, where the work in connection with this Review is reported, the term 'this Working Party' is used. For other reviews, the term 'committee' or the name of the review Chairman is used.

Korean place-names

6. Korean place-names in the Report are given in the form in use in the 1950s, eg 'Pusan' rather than 'Busan'.

Acronyms and abbreviations

7. This Report uses acronyms and abbreviations for common terms throughout. Readers should refer to **Appendix 1**, Explanation of Terms, for their meaning.

Acknowledgments

8. The Working Party would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following individuals and organisations during the course of the Review. Many others were also involved in providing material, administrative support and guidance in the course of the Review.

Individuals

Roger Bacon	Secretariat support
Tim Bloomfield	Background briefing
Reverend J B Brownbill	Background briefing
Professor Robin Creyke	Legal advice
H Robert Downey	Background briefing
Quentin Evans	IT advice
Colonel Dianne Gallasch	Research support
Professor Jeffrey Grey Australian Defence Force Academy	Research advice
Bill Harris, HQ US Pacific Air Forces, Hawaii	Research support
Professor David Horner Australian National University	Research advice
Major-General J C Hughes AO, DSO, MC	Background briefing
John Hunter	Transcription of evidence from public hearings
Major Tim Kemp	Research support
Judith Russo	Administrative support
Teena Schumacher	Administrative support
Associate Professor Malcolm Sim Monash University	Advice on the 2005 Korean War Veterans Health Study
Margaret Sloan	Secretariat support
Rene Steele	IT support
John Sullivan, HQ US Air Forces in Europe	Research advice
Brigadier David Webster	Background briefing
Brigadier Colin Wilson	Background briefing

Organisations

Air Force Historical Research Agency, USA	Provision of source material
Australian Embassy, Tokyo	Photographs of the British Commonwealth Forces Cemetery, Yokohama, Japan
Australian Government Solicitor's Office	Legal advice
Australian War Memorial	Provision of source material and research advice
British National Archives	Provision of source material
Central Army Records Office, Melbourne	Provision of source material
Defence Honours and Awards	Policy advice and administrative support
Defence Library Service	Research support
Defence Personnel Executive	Policy advice and administrative support
Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation	Mapping support
Defence Publishing Service	Printing and graphics support
Department of Finance and Administration	Parliamentary Office hearing rooms in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth
Department of Veterans' Affairs	Advice and source material
Historians of the Navy, Army and Air Force	Research advice
National Archives of Australia (Canberra and Melbourne)	Provision of source material and research advice
Office of Australian War Graves	Policy and research advice
Parliamentary Library	Provision of source material and research advice
Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth, Victorian, South Australian and Tasmanian Parliaments	Parliamentary committee rooms
Staging Connections Pty Ltd, Fyshwick, ACT	Audio technical support at public hearings
US Army Center for Military History	Provision of source material