

HIB Number: 000814

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Subject: COMPLAINT OF LACK OF SUPPORT TO BEREAVED ADF FAMILY
Comment:
Action Area: HDSO

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HOT ISSUE BRIEF

ISSUE: COMPLAINT OF LACK OF SUPPORT TO BEREAVED ADF FAMILY

SENSITIVITY: High. [REDACTED] has become involved and the issue may come to the attention of the media.

KEY ISSUES:

- [REDACTED], killed in action in [REDACTED] has complained to the [REDACTED] of lack of support from Defence.
- [REDACTED] is planning to visit the family [REDACTED] in the next few days to listen to [REDACTED] complaints.
- DCO spoke to the family today and initially no complaints reference support were raised.
- DCO has been in contact with the family regularly since the death and has offered counselling support to the family through Government and non-Government agencies.

Contact Officer: Michael Callan W: 02 61272355 M: [REDACTED]
Authorised by: Michael Callan W: 02 61272355 M: [REDACTED]

Date issued: 11 April 2010

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BACKGROUND:

[REDACTED] was killed in action on [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] family consists of [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] contacted [REDACTED] today to advise that [REDACTED] had raised concerns about the level of support that [REDACTED] have received from Defence.

[REDACTED] was contacted by [REDACTED] on behalf of the [REDACTED] in relation to the [REDACTED] visiting with the [REDACTED] family on ANZAC Day. During [REDACTED] phone conversation with [REDACTED] raised that [REDACTED] not happy with the support [REDACTED] received from Defence, saying that [REDACTED] family are in desperate need of counselling and they have been dropped by Defence and that no counselling has been provided.

DCO had contacted [REDACTED] today who expressed no concerns around support and agreed to a planned meeting on 18 April 2011.

In response to the DVA contact DCO further contacted [REDACTED] today [REDACTED] confirmed [REDACTED] spoken to the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] indicated to [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] family have had no help from Defence since the funeral. The funeral was held on [REDACTED]

The family has been supported by a DCO Bereavement Support Team since [REDACTED] with the following contacts:

- Daily face to face: [REDACTED]
- By Telephone:
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]

• [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
The family has only recently returned from a holiday [REDACTED] starting [REDACTED]. As agreed with the family this holiday delayed any meetings or support from DCO. DCO did have limited contact with the family by SMS during the holiday.

DCO has provided advice and offered counselling through VCS and local community resources to the family since first contact. The family has accessed their own counselling services in accordance with their wishes and personal circumstances with DCO support.

DCO has planned to meet with family on 18 April 2011, to deliver the member's personal effects and the family are still receptive of this plan. The family have been given DVA paperwork and expressed the intention to complete this at the 18 April 2011 meeting with DCO.

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TALKING POINTS

- **The Australian Government extends its condolences to the family [REDACTED] during this difficult time.**
- **There have been suggestions that the family of [REDACTED], who was killed [REDACTED], has not been fully supported by Defence.**
- **The Australian Government recognises the significant contribution Defence families make to their country and provides a comprehensive support system for families of ADF members killed in service.**
- **The family [REDACTED] have been provided with a range of support by Defence, including support**

from [REDACTED] unit, and the Defence Community Organisation.

•The Defence Community Organisation has been in regular contact with the [REDACTED] and has provided advice and contact with community and Government services to support the family.

•The Defence Community Organisation has future contact planned with the [REDACTED] and will continue to support them during their time of need.

Contact Officer:	Michael Callan	W: 02 61272355	M: [REDACTED]
Authorised by:	Michael Callan	W: 02 61272355	M: [REDACTED]
PA Clearance by:	John Anderson	W: 02 61271955	M: [REDACTED]

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