

Transcript from a letter sent to Ted & Julie Hawkins

Military Chaplaincy - <http://www.military.catholic.org.au/>

Legacy - Caring for the families of deceased veterans since 1923 - [www.legacy.com.au](http://www.legacy.com.au)

RSL - The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance - [www.rsl.org.au](http://www.rsl.org.au)

As you no doubt know the Children of Viet. Vets Family Health Study has been re-badged in the final CMVH Research Protocol to reach the DVA Minister in July 2007 as “THE INTERGENERATIONAL HEALTH EFFECTS OF SERVICE IN THE MILITARY”.

The explanation for that is their desire to widen the scope of the study with time to include East Timor personnel and to also include a prospective study into troops who are yet to see service abroad. The budget of \$13.5 M is designed to cover a total personnel number of the order of two hundred thousand people all up over a five year period. The early numbers will be relatively easy to achieve but down the track unless an enormous effort is made by the ESO community, interest will wane, and there will be great difficulty experienced to achieve these numbers to gain the statistically significant result required

In order to counter this to some extent I sent the following letter off to the Minister and similar letters to other principal players in the administration of the implementation of this study. In a nutshell, we the ESOs, must have a representative on the advisory panel to the Tertiary group who is to doing the field work and study. The DVA is currently still receiving applications of interest from those institutions who wish to be that study group. Applications close end of December.

There is such a wide potential for failure because of the lack of long term interest by service personnel. I'm also anxious this does not become an exercise for the University involved to capitalise on the DVA funding to produce a reputation for itself and less of a result for the Veterans' families. The ESO rep. on the advisory panel must be enthusiastic, constructively keen to achieve the result we all seek and prepared to go the distance of at least five years. Who exactly will determine that advisory panel is unclear but it must be made apparent to the Minister's Office and the Repatriation Commission (DVA Secretariat) that without that constructive and essential ESO input this Intergenerational Study will never achieve the international acclaim I know CMVH is hoping for it or the purposeful result DVA needs in order to provide legislation on behalf of the families involved.

I would be happy to accept a guernsey to the advisory panel on behalf of the ex-service community, but whom so ever is select he/she must be prepared for the long haul this study will require as well as appreciating the history and the difficulties experienced to date. Possess a significant breadth and depth of ex-service contacts as well as experience within the ESO community of at least ten years.

I'm meeting the Minister on 12 Nov., '07 and shall bring this to him and his staffers' attention yet again. This elusive election time does not add to the mix, but we must take opportunities as they present themselves.

Regards,  
Rod.

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LETTER TO MINISTER.....31 October 2007

From  
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Tel 02 9380 8774  
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The Hon Bruce Billson MP  
Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Parliament House  
2007  
Canberra  
ACT.

31 October

RE: INTERGENERATIONAL HEALTH EFFECTS OF SERVICE IN THE  
MILITARY

Dear Minister,

Further to our discussion at the EDA National Conference at Toukley on the NSW Central Coast on 15th October, 2007 it remains and has become even more vital that a well accepted ESO representative be appointed to the advisory board of the Intergenerational Health Study on the effects of Military Service. If we are to include the sons and daughters of not only Vietnam Vets but Timor Veterans and other conflicts as well, then the need for this enthusiastic ESO supporter of the study program becomes even greater.

The greatest hurdle, to a clear run, for this study will be a failure to obtain the necessary veteran family numbers to guarantee a successful study outcome. Everything in the committee's power must be put in place to prevent this occurring and assure ourselves of veteran community support. There is so much potential in this study and where it could lead internationally, that the prospect of a poor participation rate must not even be entertained.

I spoke with Dr Graeme Killer AO at DVA this morning and he is in complete agreement on this matter. He is sending me his address on the Intergenerational Effects of Military Service to be delivered at the Dunlop Medical Research Foundation in Melbourne on Friday where I believe you are to give an opening address. I regret I shall be at a meeting in Adelaide and unable to attend.

Thank you, minister, for your attention in this matter as the budget outlay of \$13.5M on this academic exercise by your government, simply must produce a practical outcome we can all be proud of and a result to find it's rightful place in the annals of international research to enhance this country's growing medical reputation overseas.

Yours sincerely,  
Rod Bain.