



## The Hon Darren Chester MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Minister for Defence Personnel

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC

MC18-002540

- 3 DEC 2018

Mr James Brown  
President  
RSL NSW  
ANZAC House  
245 Castlereagh Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr *James* Brown

Thank you for your correspondence of 2 August 2018 concerning motions resolved by delegates, at the NSW State Congress of the Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL).

I note the motions on a range of matters from the State Congress that you have forwarded. I have asked the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Department of Defence to fully consider these proposals and respond as appropriate. I have enclosed these responses for your information.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely

**DARREN CHESTER**

Encl

**Motion:**

*That RSL NSW make representations to Defence Honours and Awards recommending that a member of the ADF killed in action (KIA), died of wounds, or died of sickness whilst on operational service is awarded a small insignia (for example a cross) which would be placed on their campaign ribbon.*

**Response:**

Over the period 2009–2011 the Department of Defence (Defence), through the Chiefs of Service Committee (COSC) carefully examined the issue of medallic recognition for ADF personnel killed in action or who died while in service either on operations or in training. The review highlighted a number of issues relating to eligibility criteria and management of such an award. For example, there was concern about the difficulty in establishing qualifying criteria for circumstances in which deaths result from service related conditions that do not become apparent for some time after completing operational service. As a result of this review, COSC decided not to progress medallic recognition for personnel who die during service.

Defence considered medallic recognition of death in service again in December 2014. During these deliberations, Defence acknowledged the complexities previously identified, and expressed ongoing concerns with developing appropriate eligibility criteria that would achieve the intent of the award, whilst meeting the expectations of family members. As a result, COSC determined that the introduction of such an award would not be progressed.

Importantly, throughout these deliberations, ADF personnel and their families were consulted and they expressed greater concern with establishing and maintaining effective and efficient support programs, rather than medallic recognition.

COSC also acknowledged that efficient and flexible recognition was being made through the Services with the provision of Bereavement or Remembrance Pins, which is a practice that remains extant.