



2 June 2020

The Hon Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
MG 8, Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Morrison,

On behalf of the membership of RSL NSW I wish to register our concerns about the rejection of the Honours and Awards Tribunal recommendation to award Edward Sheean the Victoria Cross for Australia in recognition of his gallantry in the Timor Sea in December 1942. The Tribunal, having been set up as the relevant statutory authority to independently deal with Defence honours and award matters has not had a recommendation rejected in the past. While acknowledging the role of your position and the Minister's in decision-making, as a veteran's representative organisation we see a potentially disturbing precedent.

The Tribunal has a strong and experienced panel of members and they have conducted a review in accordance with the terms of reference and the procedures prescribed in the Act and have made recommendations according to their findings. The membership of RSL NSW believe that the integrity and independence of this tribunal must be maintained, and we respectfully request that this decision to reject the recommendation be reviewed and reversed.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Ray James'.

Ray James
Acting President RSL NSW

CC:
Minister for Defence
National President, RSL