



**State Minister's Message
Issue 53 (9 February, 2010)**

A regular update from the Office of the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, The Hon. Michael Atkinson M.P.

2010 Ex-Service Commemorative Calendar

In December, 2008 the South Australian Government created a Veterans' Advisory Council (V.A.C.). The V.A.C. has 13 members and an independent Chairman, Sir Eric Neal, A.C., C.V.O., a former Governor of South Australia. The V.A.C. provides a direct link to the State Cabinet on issues of concern to the veterans' community. It meets bi-monthly and makes recommendations to Minister Atkinson.

Over the past year, the V.A.C. has discussed the merits of establishing an ex-service commemorative calendar listing events of significance to the veterans' community. This will be a reference for Government, veterans, schools and the general public who wish to learn more about our military history and/or participate in commemorative activities.

Members of the V.A.C. liaised with the ex-service community to ascertain the events of significance to the veterans' community in South Australia. The V.A.C. then made a collective decision about which of the events should be included in the calendar. This was a time consuming and difficult task.

The V.A.C. are aware the inaugural Ex-Service Commemorative Calendar will be the subject of some debate in the veterans' community and changes will no doubt be suggested for the 2011 calendar. If listeners wish to see the calendar for themselves, they can contact Veterans SA on 8207 1723 or visit www.veteranssa.agd.sa.gov.au. Any feedback listeners wish to contribute will be gratefully received.

HMAS Melbourne & Voyager Collision Anniversary

On the evening of 10 February, 1964, the aircraft carrier HMAS *Melbourne*, flagship of the Royal Australian Navy, and the Daring-class destroyer HMAS *Voyager* were conducting a night exercise to the south-east of Jervis Bay. The carrier struck the destroyer amidships, slicing it in half. The *Voyager's* Captain and Bridge Officers were killed by the impact.

For the next three hours, the crew of the badly damaged *Melbourne* worked to rescue survivors from the water. Tragically, 82 officers and sailors lost their lives.

Minister Atkinson asks that the veterans' community recognise and acknowledge the sacrifice of those killed in peacetime and training and the terrible impact on their families.

For more information about any of the items mentioned, please contact Veterans SA on 8207 1723.