



State Minister's Message Issue 32 (17 September, 2009)

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

RSL National Congress

Minister Atkinson has welcomed the RSL National Congress to Adelaide from 13-17 September.

The Congress is the principal decision making and policy development meeting of the RSL for 2009. Resolutions and proposals are received from grass roots members at sub-branches. These resolutions are coordinated and considered at Branch Congresses from where endorsed resolutions are forwarded to National Congress for consideration. The League's policies and proposals to Government are consequently updated and progressed.

ANZAC Day Schools' Awards Announced

Minister Atkinson congratulates the 3 South Australian Schools that have been successful in winning ANZAC Day Schools' Awards. Henley High School was the State Winner of the Secondary Schools section, Magill Junior Primary the Primary Schools section and St Michael's College won the Best Commemorative Art project Nation-wide.

The Anzac Day Schools' Awards is funded under the Australian Government's *Saluting Their Service* Commemorations program and administered by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. School students are encouraged to learn about Australia's wartime heritage and to develop innovative ways to commemorate the service and sacrifice of our servicemen and women each Anzac Day.

This year 21 schools shared in \$22,500 prize money. For more information visit the Commemoration section of the DVA website at www.dva.gov.au

Families of Timor Veterans Study

Minister Atkinson applauds the Commonwealth Government's initiative to conduct a study into the effects of military service in Timor-Leste on the families of service personnel. The 20th of September will mark 10 years since Australians deployed to East Timor and with Australian Military personnel still there it is important to understand the consequences of deployment on the families of military personnel.

The \$2 million Timor-Leste Family Study will provide evidence of the health impacts of deployment on a service member's family, helping guide future policy on Government support for the families of service personnel.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs' (DVA) Family Study Program already includes a study into the intergenerational effects of Vietnam service. By researching more recent experiences and younger children, the Timor-Leste Family Study will provide valid and useful results generally applicable to the effects of other recent deployments.

The Study will help establish risks and protective factors associated with any identified health impacts. Most critically, it will establish if a direct association can be made between any identified distinctive health characteristics and active East Timor service. To be completed by 30 June 2011, the Study will help inform DVA and ADF service delivery and support for families.