



## State Minister's Message Issue 25 (29 July, 2009)

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

### **Suoi Chau Pha Anniversary**

Minister Atkinson encourages members of the veterans' community to join ex-members of 7RAR and their families and friends at a commemorative service on Thursday, 6 August at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Torrens Parade Ground at 11am.

The commemorative service is to honour the men of 7RAR who made the ultimate sacrifice for Australia at the Battle of Suoi Chau Pha, South Vietnam on 6 August, 1967. The service will also remember all men of 7RAR who gave their lives, were wounded, or who served in defence of Australia.

Minister Atkinson acknowledges the exemplary service record of 7RAR and encourages all members of the veterans' community to attend this noteworthy anniversary.

### **Medallions to honour Fuzzy Wuzzies**

Minister Atkinson praises the initiative to award a commemorative medallion honouring the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels' care for Australian soldiers during the Second World War in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Many Australian soldiers involved in the PNG campaign owe their lives to the civilians, who are affectionately known as Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.

An estimated 50,000 Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels assisted Australian soldiers by carrying supplies, building bases, airfields and other infrastructure, as well as evacuating the sick and wounded from the fighting. The medallions are available to surviving Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels and their widows or widowers.

### **Australian Soldier Killed in Afghanistan**

Private Benjamin Ranaudo, 22, from the Townsville-based 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, was killed by an anti-personnel explosive device.

Private Ranaudo was on his first deployment to Afghanistan and had previously served in East Timor.

A second Australian digger was seriously wounded in the explosion, along with three Afghan civilians, including an eight year-old boy.

Eleven Australian soldiers have now been killed in Afghanistan.

Minister Atkinson honours the sacrifice of this brave young soldier and sends his condolences to Private Ranaudo's family.