



## State Minister's Message Issue 26 (6 August, 2009)

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

### **Remains of last Missing Servicemen from Vietnam Found**

Minister Atkinson has welcomed the news that the remains of the final two missing Australian Defence Force personnel – including one South Australian - from the Vietnam War have been located.

The bodies of South Australian Flying Officer Michael Herbert and Pilot Officer Robert Carver were found near wreckage of their downed aircraft in the Quang Nam province of Vietnam near the border with Laos in a remote and hilly location with dense jungle.

Their RAAF Canberra bomber A84-231 disappeared on 3 November 1970 and an Air Force investigation team, which had been deployed this year to Vietnam, located the plane's wreckage in April.

The recovery team discovered human remains in the vicinity of the crash site and the remains were transported to Hanoi, where Vietnamese and Australian forensic specialists identified them as those of Flying Officer Michael Herbert and Pilot Officer Robert Carver.

Mr Atkinson says a timetable for the return of these remains to Australia has yet to be agreed between the Australian and Vietnamese Governments. Details of the burial of the airmen are a private matter for the families.

"These airmen gave their lives in the service of their nation. I hope finding the remains of the airmen will bring some comfort to the families."

### **Vietnam Veterans' Day**

Veterans' Affairs Minister Michael Atkinson is encouraging all Vietnam Veterans and their families to attend Vietnam Veteran Day activities to be held on Sunday 16 August 2009 at Torrens Parade Ground.

"Vietnam Veterans' Day is an important day that remembers Australia's involvement in our longest and most controversial war", he said.

"Between 1963 and 1971 over 500 Australians were killed and 2,500 wounded in Vietnam. Of those killed, 58 came from South Australia."

"Vietnam Veterans' Day is a time for all veterans to get together with their families and friends to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice and those who have died since."

Vietnam Veterans' Day will commence with a Gunfire Breakfast from 8.30am at the Torrens Parade Ground. This will be followed by a march from the corner of North Terrace and Gawler Place to the Torrens Parade Ground commencing at 10.30am.

At the conclusion of the march a Memorial Service will be held at the Vietnam War Memorial commencing at 11.00am. A concert will commence at 12.00 noon and an afternoon of high class entertainment featuring a host of past and present artists is promised.

Further details can be obtained by ringing the Vietnam Veterans' Association on 8232 9422.

## **Trojan's Trek**

The philosophy of the Trojan's Trek is to encourage participants to shift their mindset from "victim to warrior".

This unique program aimed at assisting younger veterans (post Vietnam era) adjust to the pressures of a new life outside or within the military will be conducted in the remote Flinders Ranges from 21 to 25 September 2009.

The program was developed with assistance of veterans from the RAR Association and the Veterans and Families Counselling Service, VVCS. The program is conducted by ex RAR members and involvement, is in confidence.

Please think carefully about attending and advise Moose Dunlop by 28 August if you wish to take part. It will be more mentally challenging than physical and well within most people's capabilities. Past participants have enjoyed and benefited from the experience.

If you are interested in, or know of someone who may be interested in participating there is more information available on the [www.rarsa.org.au](http://www.rarsa.org.au) website or by telephoning Moose Dunlop on 0408 088 886.