



ROYAL NEW ZEALAND RETURNED AND SERVICES' ASSOCIATION (INC.)

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RNZRSA accepts Vietnam package as just and fair

Replying to the Government's announcement on Vietnam veterans' concerns, RNZRSA National President, John Campbell says:

"RNZRSA is on the whole pleased with the Government's response. It has produced a comprehensive and reasonable package, which wholly or partially meets the recommendations of both the Joint Working Group Report, and the RNZRSA Submission to that Group.

"It provides for veterans, their children, and their families, both now, and in the future. Government has listened, and Government has responded in a way that addresses the major health and welfare issues raised by Vietnam veterans and their families.

"I would urge veterans and their families to carefully analyse the Government's package. In a number of respects it goes beyond what is offered to Vietnam veterans in the United States and Australia. Indeed it has far reaching benefits and consequences for all veterans of this nation.

"There is still work to be done within the framework of the Government response. It has however, provided an agreed basis on which RNZRSA, EVSA, and Government, can move forward to a satisfactory conclusion on these matters. "RNZRSA is disappointed that the Government did not accept both the RNZRSA and Joint Working Group recommendations that Vietnam veterans be paid back the tax they paid during their active service on behalf of New Zealand.

"This is a modest sum for each veteran and would, in RNZRSA's view have given further recognition to the Vietnam veterans, their service and the forty years of denial and mistreatment. Vietnam veterans are the only veteran cohort to have paid tax on active service, or to have paid tax without a compensatory allowance framework.

"However, RNZRSA believes that when the veterans and their families analyse the Government's package they will see that it has met the majority of the concerns they expressed to the Joint Working Group during the consultation process, in a fair and just way.

“This was a hard won package, but Government should be acknowledged for the manner in which it met this difficult challenge.

“RNZRSA now hopes that the Government response will assist materially in bringing closure to this long and sad episode. RNZRSA will continue to be involved through the establishment of the Joint Implementation Group that will oversee the successful implementation of the package.

“A year ago a process began which it was hoped and believed would lead to fair solutions to the long-running concerns of Vietnam veterans and their families. They should be pleased with the result.

“RNZRSA sees the package as worthy, just and fair.”

For Further Information Please Contact

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