



® VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
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The Hon Julia Gillard MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

1/7/2011

Dear Prime Minister,

Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA) is concerned that introduction of a price on carbon may have a direct impact on the income of members. Those concerns are shared by many disabled veterans, war widows and families throughout the ex- service community.

I do not argue for or against carbon tax as a principle, but wish to bring to your attention the issues directly related to the compensation sought by veterans on disability pensions and war widows in the event that this tax is introduced.

ABC News Online reports that as a result of the introduction of a price on carbon the Federal Government will permanently boost payments to pensioners including up-front cash compensation and plans to increase pensions by 2.5%.

Climate Change Minister Greg Combet is reported to have said the Government wants to assist pensioners when he said "We will make sure that pensioners have got more money right from the start of the carbon price and the assistance that we provide will be permanent." Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan is reported to have said it is important to assist pensioners. He stated "What we've said is we will provide assistance to pensioners over and above their normal indexation".

Veterans who receive a disability pension under the Veterans' Entitlements Act were assured by Treasurer Swan and others that they would be included in the delivery of recommendations from the Harmer Review. Veterans were excluded.

The government assured all pensioners over 60 that they would receive tax benefits from contributory superannuation schemes. Ex-Service people on DFRB/DFRDB and MSBS do have to pay tax as they are not deemed to be contributory, despite the fact that Service personnel contributed a legislated 5.5% of salary.

Your government recently announced that all pensioners will receive a Set Top box for the introduction of digital TV. The fine print states that this only happens if you are in receipt of a full pension. Once again veterans on part service pension will miss out.

"HONOUR THE DEAD.... But Fight Like Hell for the Living".

The latest set- back for veterans was the rejection of the fairer indexation of DFRB/DFRDB by the Senate after the House of Representatives overwhelming approval of it.

Prime Minister, veterans view these acts as a disgraceful betrayal of the veteran community by the government you now lead. You will understand why we are sceptical when we hear what Treasurer Swan and Minister Combet have to say concerning the Carbon Tax compensation for 'pensioners'.

The VVAA seeks an unequivocal assurance that with the introduction of a price on carbon, veteran disability pensioners and war widows will be among those fully and properly compensated to ensure their disability pensions will maintain their relative value to other government pensions and keep abreast of rising prices.

The Association recommends that in the event this carbon tax is introduced, all veteran pensioners and war widows should be exempted from paying the tax, receive an immediate up- front increase directly proportionate to the quantum of the tax and proportional indexation of their pensions/superannuation.

The VVAA supports the position articulated in a recent letter from Mr John (Blue) Ryan OAM, National President of the TPI Association. I am available to discuss this issue with you as it is a matter of great concern to members of the VVAA and the broader ex-Service community.

Yours Sincerely,



Ron Coxon OAM
National President