

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2011**

This year Vietnam Veterans Day is Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August. On this date some 45 years ago, D Coy 6 RAR engaged a far superior force of North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong guerillas in a rubber plantation at Long Tan, South Vietnam, with the loss of 17 young Infantry and one Armed Corp soldiers. It is believed that enemy losses were in the vicinity of 2500 mark. This action definitely reinforced the ANZAC Tradition set some 96 years ago at Gallipoli.

After the Welcome Home March in Sydney in October 1987 the Federal Government, under PM Bob Hawke, decreed that this day would be set aside and be known as Vietnam Veterans Day, a day that everyone, regardless of whether they were service persons or not, could pause and remember not only those very gallant men of D Coy 6 RAR but also the 521 young people who paid the supreme price, and lost their lives in the search for freedom. We will also remember the some 2500 members of all branches of the Service who were wounded.

We also remember the Veterans and families who have suffered since and are still suffering today. We will pause to remember the tragic losses of our Allies, especially the 51 New Zealanders, 58 000 American, and also the Vietnamese. The Vietnamese losses were in the vicinity of 1 000 000 combat killed and 4 000 000 civilians with approx. 1 000 000 suffering from exposure to Agent Orange today.

This Memorial Service and March is being organised and controlled by the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Qld Branch (VVAA Qld) in partnership with the Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia Qld (VVFA Qld). The organisers have arranged with the Treasury Casino management for the use of their Premiers Bar from 09.30AM to 12 Noon for all veterans and families to gather prior to the March. Marchers will form up in Redacliff Place, ready to step off at 12 Noon, for the march to ANZAC Square.

The parade will be led by fellow veteran and new State President of the Qld RSL, Mr Terry Meehan along with State President VVAA Qld Mr John P Smith OAM, JP (Qual), and Mr Mal Wheat, State President VVFA Qld

The guest speaker this year is Dr Mike Naughton OBE, RMO 1 RAR Bien Hoa 1965 – 66 and CO 1 Aust Fd Hospital Vung Tau. Mike is currently in semi-retirement plus assisting at the Field Hospital Enoggera. The Catafalque Party and Flag Orderlies are to be provided by current serving members of 8/9 RAR at this time.

All families and friends of Vietnam Veterans are cordially invited to attend along with their Sons, Daughters and Grandchildren. For those attending and not marching could you please (endeavor to) be in ANZAC Square no later than 12 Noon (if possible). We would like to see as many as possible marching.

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