

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this sensitive inquiry. I am a TPI Gold Card holder, married, Spouse also Returned Service Person, with children and under 60 years of age. I offer the following points on some of the content of the Draft Report and further items that may warrant investigation.

A. *The definition of the word Veteran: Veteran<sup>1</sup>; noun*

1. *someone who has seen long service in any occupation or office.*
  2. *a soldier who has seen active service: a veteran of the desert war.*
  3. *anyone who has had any experience in some field, especially a soldier.*
- Veteran; adjective*
4. *experienced through long service or practice; having served for a long period; grown old in service.*
  5. *of, relating to, or characteristic of veterans.*
  6. *(of soldiers) having had service or experience in warfare: veteran troops.*

This conflicts with the definition adopted by the commission as a result of accepting the tabled definition by the ESO "Round Table" of one day in ADF service.

I offer the use of the word "Returned" as a way of naming service persons that are Veterans under the true meaning of the word;

B. *returned<sup>2</sup>; adjective*

1. *of or relating to someone or something that has returned or been returned: a returned lover; returned mail.*
2. *of or relating to a member of the armed forces who has returned home from a war: a returned soldier; a returned serviceman/person.*

History shows that this word was used from the Great War onwards, until the Vietnam Conflict, when the word "Veteran" gained traction in the mainstream Ex Service Community.

While looking for a new name for the current Department, I suggest we look backward again and call it the "Reparation Commission" instead of the Veteran Services Commission. By definition, the word "Repatriation" fits the new roles that the Commissioner is trying to implement through these suggested reforms in the Draft Report.

C. *repatriation<sup>3</sup>; noun*

1. *the act of returning to one's native land.*
2. *the return of people to their native land: the repatriation of immigrants*
3. *the return of an item to the native land of the owner: the repatriation of goods; the repatriation of human remains.*
4. *Also, NZ<sup>4</sup>, rehabilitation, rehab. assistance given to ex-service personnel returning to a civilian life, in the form of pensions, medical care, allowances for dependants, etc.*

I note the current initiative from DVA being the issue of a Lapel Pin to Ex Service persons in order to identify them in everyday society. I believe that this issue can be done with the person wearing their Returned from Active Service Badge (RAS Badge) or Operational Service Badge (OSB Badge) that has already been issued to them as a result of their eligible service. Why waste more money on trinkets when that money could be put to better use supporting Returned Persons sleeping rough or putting food on the family table.

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<sup>1</sup> Macquarie Australian Dictionary

<sup>2</sup> Macquarie Australian Dictionary

<sup>3</sup> Macquarie Australian Dictionary

<sup>4</sup> The Kiwis are smarter than us, give their system a good look at

I note that your comparisons between civilian and Returned persons<sup>5</sup> under the Gold Card provisions does not take into account the other VEA concessions<sup>6</sup>, <https://www.dva.gov.au/factsheet-con02-concessions-victoria>, currently available to holders of a TPI/Gold Card. If these concessions are removed as a result of this inquiry, I for one will have trouble making ends meet to provide an adequate lifestyle for my family

Please be mindful that some of us are still putting kids through school. The erosion of the VCES<sup>7</sup> that is currently provided would disadvantage those who would benefit the most.

Lastly, may I respectfully submit that the Commission be highly judicious in its analysis of the expected Ex Service Organisation (ESO) input into this inquiry. Commissioner, please be careful as each ESO has their own agenda and not one organisation fully represents all demographic and age groups of Australia's Returned Service Persons.

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<sup>5</sup> Draft Report Box 5

<sup>6</sup> DVA web Page, Victoria only, other States and Territories listed

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.dva.gov.au/about-dva/accountability-and-reporting/annual-reports/annual-reports-2016-17/departments-veterans-6>