



**ADSO** ALLIANCE OF DEFENCE SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

24 November 2020

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **NATURAL JUSTICE MUST PREVAIL**

Now is the time for a considered assessment of the findings of the Inspector General's Report into alleged serious misconduct by Australia's Special Forces in Afghanistan. It is an internal ADF Report that now is subject to ADF disciplinary and administrative processes. The appointment of an independent investigator working with the AFP is a part of this process.

The current speculative media coverage ignores the fact that these further investigations, through the AFP, are just commencing. In short, these processes could take years and veterans and their families caught up in this, deserve our support.

Sadly, the SAS Regiment, as a whole, and their families are now subject to public criticism for allegations against a minority and that is extremely unfair. Most of these operators have done an amazing job, which was endorsed by the CDF. Natural Justice must not be denied to them. By implication these allegations are also affecting the broader veteran community who also deserve our support.

The group of 18 ex-service Associations that make up the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO)<sup>1</sup> wishes to encourage the Australian public and the veteran community to rally around the SAS Regiment and the Special Forces, in supporting all veterans of the Afghanistan conflict and their families as they face years of investigation, scrutiny and public media coverage.

ESOs across the country are encouraged to reach out to all veterans of the Afghanistan conflict and their families. Critically, it is also important that we honour the memory of those who have been killed in action and their families.

#### **Kel Ryan**

National Spokesman

Alliance of Defence Service Organisation

Phone: (02) 6265 9530 | Mobile: 0418 759 120

PO Box 4166 KINGSTON ACT 2604

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<sup>1</sup> ADSO comprises The Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA), Naval Association of Australia (NAA), RAAF Association (RAAFA), Royal Australian Regiment Corporation (RARC), Australian Special Air Service Association (ASASA), the Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Service Men and Women, the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia, Partners of Veterans Association of Australia, Royal Australian Armoured Corps Corporation (RAACC), the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association Australia (NMBVAA), Defence Reserves Association (DRA), Australian Gulf War Veterans Association, Australian Commando Association, the War Widows Guild of Australia, Military Police Association Australia (MPAA), the Australian Army Apprentices Association, the Women Veterans Network, and the Combat Support Association.