



Victor Dominello MP

Minister for Citizenship and Communities
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 22 August 2013

JOBS HELP FOR OUR YOUNG VETERANS

A project to help young veterans who have just left the military find a new job was launched by the Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello at North Bondi RSL Club today.

Securing Our Veterans' Future is a joint project between the NSW Government, ClubsNSW and the RSL & Services Clubs Association to assist ex-Australian Defence Force personnel move more easily back into civilian life.

Mr Dominello said *Securing Our Veterans' Future* is the first employment project aimed at younger veterans by a government in Australia. It has the backing of the Australian Defence Force.

"Some of the more than 5,000 men and women who leave the Australian military each year, including those who have served in overseas' conflicts such as Afghanistan, face difficulties trying to find work," Mr Dominello said.

"For many of them, the military has been their first and only employer so they find it challenging to find and apply for a job once they leave military service.

"As our troops return from Afghanistan it is important to show that the community is listening to the needs of veterans and helping them connect with the society they have served.

"With the assistance of ClubsNSW and the RSL & Services Clubs Association, *Securing Our Veterans' Future* will help place younger veterans in jobs within the registered clubs' industry, whether it's in management, catering or hospitality.

"The NSW Government is already talking to other industry groups about expanding the initiative," Mr Dominello said.

The program is also open to the spouses of ADF members or contemporary veterans.

The ADF, the NSW Business Chamber and veterans' support organisations Soldier On, Trans-Civ, Defence in Business, Defence Families of Australia and RSL NSW (including DefenceCare) will promote the project among younger veterans.

ClubsNSW CEO Anthony Ball said clubs employ almost 42,000 people across the State.

"Many of the skills and qualities ingrained in military personnel, such as leadership, loyalty, teamwork and integrity, are also highly valued by registered, not-for-profit clubs," Mr Ball said.

“This coming decade will see more young Australian combat veterans in our community than at any time since the end of the Vietnam War almost 40 years ago.

“As community-owned organisations, clubs are uniquely placed to provide a welcoming, supportive environment for young veterans who are making such a huge transition in both their personal and working lives. Registered clubs can also provide a diversity and range of jobs and training for these young veterans that simply isn’t available in other industries.”

RSL & Services Clubs Association CEO, Graeme Carroll, said the initiative was a continuation of the support that RSL and kindred clubs have provided to veterans and their families for more than 60 years.

“Clearly, a number of our soldiers returning from Afghanistan at the end of the year will be looking to transition out of the ADF and we want them to know that their service to our country is not forgotten,” Mr Carroll said.

“In conjunction with our Operation CARE program to support our wounded soldiers and their families, this initiative will ensure that they are made welcome when they visit our clubs and provided an opportunity to secure employment.”

The State’s peak business organisation, the NSW Business Chamber will promote the initiative to its more than 10,000 members.

Chamber CEO Stephen Cartwright said: “This is a great initiative from the NSW Government that will benefit veterans through increased employment opportunities. Employers will also benefit from access to the unique skills that veterans offer.

“At a time when NSW businesses continue to report skills shortages, it makes sense for employers to think strategically about recruitment and consider the skills that veterans can bring to the workplace.”

Defence’s Head of People Capability, Major General Gerard Fogarty, said *Securing Our Veterans’ Future* was a great example of government and business working together to help support military personnel as they leave the Navy, Army or Air Force.

“We welcome this new initiative and the support it provides our talented people as they transition out of the military and back into their civilian lives,” Major General Fogarty said.

The initiative is open to those who have recently left the military and aimed at those who served in the ADF from 1999 onwards.

Media Jim O’Rourke 0409 185 431