



PRIME MINISTER

Reference: MC20-149217

06 OCT 2020

Mr Mike Doroshenko
President
Australian Federal Police Former Members Association Inc.
PO Box 9603
DEAKIN ACT 2600

Dear Mr Doroshenko

Thank you for your letter dated 20 September 2020 regarding the use of the term ‘police veteran’ for former police.

As the proud son of a police officer, I know that law enforcement is a vocation that demands excellence and commitment, but which also carries real risks. Those risks are faced every day, and can only be borne through a deep sense of duty and a passionate determination to uphold the highest expectations of our community.

I appreciate the work you and your organisation do to advocate for sworn and unsworn members of the Australian Federal Police (AFP). More broadly, I am profoundly grateful for the work of all of our law enforcement professionals who put themselves in harm’s way to keep the rest of us safe.

Although you offer some compelling reasons to adopt the phrase ‘police veteran’ to acknowledge and celebrate the work and sacrifice of our law enforcement professionals, I must regretfully decline. In November 2017, consensus was reached between the Commonwealth and all states and territories by the then Veterans’ Ministers’ Roundtable regarding a common definition of the term ‘veteran’. It was agreed by both levels of government that ‘veteran’ would be defined as ‘a person who is serving or has served in the Australian Defence Force’.

I acknowledge the impacts of policing duties on the health and wellbeing of members of the force. Be assured, this decision does not at all diminish the important place of the police in our nation. I will continue to speak passionately about the role you play and the sacrifices you make, as I always have done, and my government will continue to support law enforcement.

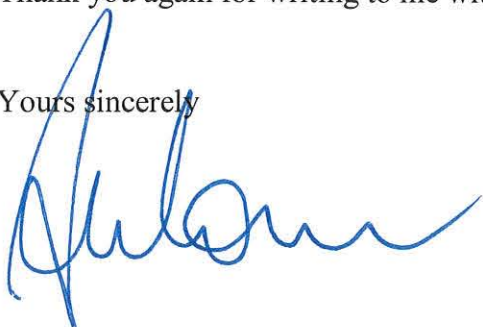
Last year, we committed almost \$6 million to develop mental health services to support members of the police force and emergency services. This included \$1.88 million to *Fortem Australia* to improve health and wellbeing of emergency service workers and meet the needs of individuals and families from early intervention to crisis support.

I understand you have also written in similar terms to the Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Peter Dutton MP, in similar terms. I strongly encourage you to continue to engage with my Government on opportunities to enhance the health and wellbeing of your members and to recognise and celebrate the work of the brave men and women, sworn and unsworn, who keep our community safe.

I have copied this letter to the Minister for Home Affairs and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Darren Chester MP.

Thank you again for writing to me with your proposal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Morrison', written in a cursive style.

SCOTT MORRISON