

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Friday, 18 August 2023

VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY MARKS 50 YEAR MILESTONE

This Vietnam Veterans' Day, the Andrews Labor Government is honouring Victoria's Vietnam veterans, paying tribute to the service and sacrifice of those who fought for Australia including those who never returned home.

Today is a particularly significant Vietnam Veterans' Day as 2023 marks the 50-year anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

Australia's participation in the war formally ended when the Governor-General issued a proclamation on 11 January 1973. The only combat troops remaining in Vietnam were a platoon guarding the Australian embassy in Saigon who were withdrawn in June 1973.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Veterans Natalie Suleyman today visited the Shine of Remembrance to pay tribute to the 60,000 Australian men and women who served in the Vietnam War – including 523 Australians who lost their lives and more than 3,000 who were wounded.

The Labor Government has recorded interviews with five Vietnam veterans to record and share their remarkable stories as part of the *Supporting Those That Served* initiative, which provides funding to digital productions that ensure the stories of our veterans are immortalised and remembered.

The Government is supporting veterans now and into the future with the recent launch of the Veterans Card – an Australian-first initiative which recognises the service and sacrifice made by all current and former Australian Defence Force members living in Victoria.

The Labor Government will invest more than \$36 million over four years in the digital card, which has already been taken up by more than 6,000 veterans since being launched in July.

The Veterans Card provides eligible veterans with discounted registration for one light vehicle, free trailer and caravan registration, a marine (boating) licence, free public transport on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, a fishing licence exemption, and access to the Victorian Government veteran-specific employment programs.

Vietnam Veterans' Day comes as the Government has launched two Veterans grants programs: the Anzac Day Proceeds Fund and Victoria Remembers to honour, commemorate and educate Victorians about veterans and provide welfare related activities to ex-service community.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"The 50-year anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in Vietnam is a time to reflect on the impact of the war and pay tribute to those who served, and to those for whom the battle never ended."

Quote attributable to Minister for Veterans Natalie Suleyman

"While 50 years is a long time, the memories of Vietnam remain strong for many. It's so important that we continue to acknowledge the service and sacrifice of our Vietnam veterans."

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