



The Hon Alan Griffin MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Federal Member for Bruce

Mr Terry Fogarty
16 Mann Street
NORTHGATE QLD 4013

Dear Mr Fogarty

Thank you for your letter of 5 March 2008 in which you suggest adding a post-war 'Date of Death' field to the Nominal Roll of Vietnam Veterans website. I apologise for the delay in replying.

The Nominal Roll website lists those members of Australia's defence forces who served in Vietnam or the waters adjacent to Vietnam during that conflict. In doing so, the website provides a 'snapshot' of an individual's service during that conflict by displaying a range of information for each person.

To maintain the authority and integrity of the website, the data displayed is gathered from Service records and archival material from the period held by the Department of Defence or other institutions such as the National Archives of Australia or the Australian War Memorial.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) publishes a number of nominal rolls on the Internet and in each case the 'Date of Death' field relates to war dead, death during a designated war period, and the 'Date of Death' field is confirmed from Service records. For those eligible veterans who die post-war of a war related cause, the Office of Australian War Graves is notified of their eligibility by DVA and subsequently provides official commemoration. As not all veterans are clients of the DVA, or are eligible to be commemorated, there is no obligation to inform DVA of their passing, and their deaths are not known by the Department.

The nominal roll databases are complex and the integrity of the information collected and displayed is of utmost importance. The addition of information not related to the war period would not be in keeping with the purpose of the rolls. Therefore, the use of the 'Date of Death' field for other than the designated 'war dead' or the addition of a new field for post-war dead is not an option that the Government wishes to pursue.

I trust you will understand the rationale behind this approach.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Griffin', written over a horizontal line.

Alan Griffin

12 MAY 2008

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