

Veterans' Affairs

HIGHLIGHTS

Labour will:

- Ensure veterans receive the appropriate care and support
- Review government funding relationship with RNZRSA focusing on greater certainty
- Promote greater engagement of veterans with the community

Introduction

New Zealand owes a debt of gratitude and has a special obligation to those who have served our country in the New Zealand Defence Force in conflicts and in deployments overseas as well as peacetime. The next Labour government will make support for veterans a priority by building upon the record of the previous Labour government. A Labour government will take the needs and concerns of veterans seriously. The Minister of Veterans Affairs will work closely with veterans groups including the RNZRSA to ensure that veterans are listened to and have a strong voice in a Labour government.

Review Veterans' Services

Labour will ensure veterans receive the appropriate care and support. The incoming Veterans Affairs' Minister will review existing services provided to veterans with a particular focus on health. Labour will focus on improving access to in-person consultations for identification of PTSD. Labour will also work to support greater social support links between veterans and the military.

Labour will:

- Ensure Veterans receive the appropriate support
- Review support services provided to Veterans
- Improve access to PTSD identification.

Cost: Initial review funded from existing baseline

Greater certainty for RSA government funding

In 2008 the RNZRSA was provided with a grant that was split over four years which enabled the Association greater certainty in operating its support services. Since that funding expired, there is now greater uncertainty by granting funding on an annual basis. The current government also cut support for RNZRSA veteran support services from \$250,000 to \$175,000 per year presently.

A Labour government will work with the RNZRSA on a funding relationship that encourages certainty, longevity and equity for the Association and for veterans.

Labour will:

- Work with the RNZRSA to provide greater certainty in funding relationship

Engage veterans with the community

Veterans have much to contribute to our communities. Labour will work to provide more opportunities for veterans to engage with schools and community groups. This benefits both the veteran and wider society. Labour will investigate ways to encourage greater RNZRSA membership among recently retired veterans and ensure the Association continues its strong advocacy for veterans.

Labour will:

- Work with the RNZRSA to develop a pilot programme engaging veterans in schools
- Support the RNZRSA to encourage greater membership among recently demobilised veterans.

Cost: Initially funded from baselines

