



**BILL SHORTEN MP  
LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS & ABORIGINAL AND  
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS  
MEMBER FOR MARIBYRNONG**

**THE HON RICHARD MARLES MP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE  
MEMBER FOR CORIO**

**AMANDA RISHWORTH MP  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE PERSONNEL  
MEMBER FOR KINGSTON**

**LABOR'S VOW TO ADF PERSONNEL SET IN STONE**

A Shorten Labor Government will put in place a formal agreement to ensure the nation's armed force is fully supported during and after their service, and will legislate regular reporting to Parliament on how Australia is supporting military personnel.

Labor will sign Australia's first Military Covenant, recognising the immense commitment our armed force makes to serve their country, and formalising our nation's commitment to look after those who have sacrificed for our nation.

The Covenant will be similar to the United Kingdom's Armed Forces Covenant, a principles document which promises that those who serve or have served in the armed force and their families will be treated fairly.

Labor will work with the Australian Defence Force, Department of Veterans' Affairs and ex-service organisations to draft the relevant wording of a military covenant and associated legislation.

In addition, a Labor Government would also introduce legislation which will require future governments to report annually to parliament on how they are meeting their responsibilities to supporting our serving and ex-service personnel.

Australians who serve in our armed force can require specialised health and social services assistance. The Covenant will make sure those needs don't slip through the cracks.

While we acknowledge a bipartisan commitment to giving the best possible support to our serving and ex-service personnel, this Covenant will formalise that commitment.

Those who put their lives on hold to serve their country deserve to know, in no uncertain terms, that we acknowledge the sacrifice they and their families have made in service to our nation, and that we are committed to being there for them now and into the future.

Labor's commitment to those who serve, and have served, is rock solid, and we will state this commitment as a core value and principle.

Signing the Covenant builds on Labor's previous commitments to the current and ex-serving defence community, including our \$121 million veterans' employment policy and our family engagement and support strategy.

Australia has a proud military history, and as such we have an obligation to all of those who have served in the name of our nation and our freedoms.

Labor's announcement today of a military covenant is a testament of our commitment to those who are serving or have served our country.

**WEDNESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2018**

**MEDIA CONTACT: LEADER'S OFFICE MEDIA UNIT 02 6277 4053**  
**JOANNE CLEARY (SHORTEN) 0428 816 751**  
**SARAH HUY (RISHWORTH) 0421 746 200**