



Stuart Robert MP

Federal Member for Fadden

Shadow Minister for Defence Science, Technology and Personnel

****MEDIA RELEASE****

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GOVERNMENT TO CUT DEFENCE RESERVE FUNDING

The Gillard Labor Government has released plans to cut Australian Defence Force (ADF) Reserve annual leave from five weeks to four weeks and will require Reservists to use their leave when volunteering.

Shadow Minister for Defence Science, Technology and Personnel, Stuart Robert, said that today's reports of a reduction to Reserve leave entitlements is deplorable and will result in a reduction to the capability and capacity of the Reserves to respond to such things as natural disasters.

'This latest assault on ADF Reservists is to be seen for what it really is – another cash grab by the Gillard Labor Government to help pay for its reckless and wasteful spending in other portfolios,' Mr Robert said.

'The Gillard Labor Government, along with its predecessor, guaranteed that Defence's Strategic Reform Program (SRP) will not affect our frontline Defence capabilities, yet here we see another example of it doing exactly that.'

Mr Robert said the Reserves have been deployed alongside their full time counterparts on every major Defence operation since Australia's involvement in East Timor in 1999 and provided invaluable support in the wake of the recent natural disasters across the nation.

'Consistently asking the Reserves to do more while reducing their resources and undercutting individual entitlements is a recipe for disaster and will result in increased separations and a marked decrease in morale,' Mr Robert said.

Mr Robert also said the Gillard Labor Government had already cut funding for the Reserves to undertake essential training.

'This latest blow to the Reserves is in addition to the already reported cuts to Reserve training budgets and puts a big question mark over individual entitlements and the long term capacity of the Reserves to deliver on what the Government asks of them.'

'The Gillard Labor Government can not be trusted when it comes to managing the ADF and must immediately move to ensure that Reservists do not suffer because of its reckless and wasteful spending programs.'

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