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****MEDIA RELEASE****

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DEATH OF AN AUSTRALIAN COMMANDO

I extend my sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Sergeant Todd Langley who was tragically killed in action in Afghanistan yesterday during a small arms engagement with insurgents.

During these difficult times, the nation's thoughts and prayers are with Sergeant Langley's family and friends.

Sergeant Langley was a decorated and experienced Commando, this being his fifth deployment to Afghanistan having previously deployed twice to East Timor.

He was a career soldier and a highly decorated warrior who was awarded two commendations for distinguished service and a unit citation for gallantry.

Men of his ilk are rare and to lose but one is a tragedy not easily overcome. His loss will be felt throughout the Australian Defence Force community and in particular by his fellow Commandos, who continue to fight in his honour and Australia's name.

I would also like to extend my best wishes to the Australian Commando who was wounded in the engagement and who remains in a serious but stable condition. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

As our troops continue to fight the good fight, we must all hold our nerve; and for those who have fought their last fight, we should honour their dedication and sacrifice.

Lest we forget Sergeant Todd Langley.

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