



Speech by

**Hon. KEN HAYWARD**

**MEMBER FOR KALLANGUR**

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Hansard 18 May 2000

### **DEFENCE FORCE RESERVES**

**Hon. K. W. HAYWARD** (Kallangur—ALP) (7.29 p.m.): Last Tuesday in the Matters of Public Interest debate I spoke about the unfair situation that exists in Australia whereby defence reservists risk their continued employment if they voluntarily undertake to perform peacekeeping activities in places such as East Timor. Since I made that speech, reservists have contacted me concerned about the unfairness of the Defence (Re-establishment) Act 1965, which covers defined areas of "defence service". Without having any knowledge of the details of this Act, I wish to acknowledge publicly the information and support for this issue provided to me by the shadow Minister for Defence, Science and Personnel, Mr Laurie Ferguson.

That Act unfairly excludes full-time service in the reserve forces that is undertaken voluntarily, as distinct from service that is undertaken as a result of a call-out. The Defence Act 1903 defines the circumstances in which a call-out can occur—situations of war, a declared defence emergency or other circumstances short of war, or an emergency where it is considered necessary to do so for the defence of Australia.

Overseas peacekeeping missions such as that in East Timor fall outside those provisions. So while the Defence (Re-Establishment) Act 1965 is still on the statute book and is located in Minister Reith's portfolio, it offers no protection for reservists currently serving in East Timor. This is an unfair situation for many people who are serving Australia overseas and doing their best for Australia in the various peacekeeping missions around the world in which they volunteer to take part.

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