




Speech By  
**Melissa McMahon**

**MEMBER FOR MACALISTER**

---

Record of Proceedings, 26 October 2021

**QUEENSLAND VETERANS' COUNCIL BILL**

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (6.58 pm): I rise to speak in support of this bill. I declare to the House that I am a proud veteran representing this side of the House. I am a proud Queensland veteran, noting that Queensland is a service state, from Canungra in the south all the way up to Lavarack Barracks and all the major military bases in between. My service number, F1804601—before they gave us computer based numbers—indicated, first of all, that I was a female, with the 'F', and the No. 1 indicated that I enlisted in the state of Queensland. I also have to admit to the House that I am still actually a current serving member of the Defence Force. I have not yet discharged and I am not required to discharge for some time yet, just in case—break glass only in case of emergency.

The veteran landscape is not homogenous. It was admitted during committee hearings that there are currently over 3½ thousand ex-service organisations throughout this state, so I acknowledge the difficult task it is to put together any body that seeks to represent veterans and ex-service personnel. I acknowledge the difficulty—in the military we use the term 'cat herding'—of getting veterans on the same page. Many of the particularly more recent ones are single-issue organisations, which I can understand. I could go into extreme detail about how many issues are currently facing the veterans community. A country that is quite eager to send its young men and women overseas does not seem so eager to look after their welfare when they return.