Serving Our Country: a history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the defence of Australia

Participant Information Sheet

What is the project about?
Serving Our Country explores the contribution to Australian defence services of Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples’ from the Boer War to 2000. Though Indigenous Australians have been relatively overlooked in ANZAC and the social history of war, they fought in all major conflicts and served in defence support (e.g. as coast watchers and pastoral workers) and peacekeeping too. This project seeks to find out how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples saw their participation, how it impacted on them, their families and communities and their relationship to the nation. We will record oral/video histories, research archival papers, photographs and other sources to investigate this history, and aim to increase public recognition of Indigenous Australians service through our research.

Who are the researchers?
The research is led by Professor Mick Dodson, Director, National Centre for Indigenous Studies (NCIS), The Australian National University.

What does participating involve?
The researchers would like to discuss your defence service OR the service of a relative or friend and to record this as a video or oral history. We might ask you if we can scan copies of family photos or papers related to defence service. The research may also involve taking photographs of objects, such as souvenirs or artworks.

Participation is VOLUNTARY. You do not have to share information or material that you want to keep private. The researcher will not record anything unless you agree that they can. You will be asked before you are recorded how you would like your story to be used and whether you want your story published or not. You are able to withdraw your data from the project and we will destroy the data. However, if your request is three months or less before our books are published, we may not be able to withdraw your data. This will be explained further in our ‘Consent form’.

How will my information/stories be used?
Information from this project will be published in articles, web sites, books, exhibitions and possibly film. A copy of the audio/video interview and transcripts will be given to you to check before anything is published. Some interviews will be transcribed. We will provide you with copies. You can read the transcript, or have it read out to you and tell us if you want to change or delete anything.

Where, when and how long will it take?
Oral/video history recording will take place 2014-2017. We will try to interview you wherever suits you best. How much time you give to the project is up to you. An oral history interview often takes an hour or more. A follow-up interview might also be requested.

What risks are involved?
Being interviewed may raise painful memories. We will provide information about the Veterans and Veterans Family Counselling Service and other services that may prove helpful if you become distressed.
Having a family member or someone you feel comfortable talking with available after the interview could be helpful too.

**Confidentiality**
This project is about recognition of the contributions to defence services of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, so we would like to acknowledge you and/or your relative by name. If you do not want to have your name or your relatives name used, we can change details so you will not be identifiable. Any information that you give us is solely for use on this project. Your answers will not in any way affect any pension, benefits or health services which you are entitled to from the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, or to which you may become entitled to in the future. If you wish, you can discontinue your participation in this research at any time.

**Information Storage**
The transcripts and recordings will be kept in a locked cabinet in the project office which is also locked after hours and is secure. Digital files will be kept on a password protected computers accessed only by the researchers. The data will be kept for at least five years following publication. When the project is finished (2017), we would also like to give a copy to a public collection where it will be kept safe, such as at The Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). You can suggest other places instead such as a community keeping place.

**Queries and Concerns**
If you would like more information about the project you can go to our temporary website http://ncis.anu.edu.au/soc or contact us:

Professor Mick Dodson: mick.dodson@anu.edu.au; 02 6125 6708  
Mr Craig Greene: craig.greene@anu.edu.au  
National Centre for Indigenous Studies  
Building 5, Fellows Road  
ANU  
Canberra ACT 0200

*The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the way we have done our research, please inform:*

Human Ethics Manager  
Human Research Ethics Committee  
The Australian National University  
T +61 (0)2 6125 3427  
E: Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au

**Veterans and Veterans families Counselling Service**
Ph: 1800 011 046 (free local call)  
Office hours – connects you to your local Veterans Counselling service centre  
After hours- connects you to Veterans line crisis counselling service

**Stolen Generations Alliance:**
Ph: 07 3843 0461  
(Website to be provided).