



The Hon. Philip Ruddock MP  
Federal Member for Berowra      Shadow Cabinet Secretary

20 August 2012

Mr John Howells  
Honorary Secretary  
Royal New South Wales Lancers' Association  
PO BOX 7287  
PENRITH SOUTH NSW 2750

Dear Mr Howells

You will be pleased to know that the Parliament passed my motion on Army Reserve Bands last week.

I have since written to the Defence Minister requesting his action on this issue, reflecting the will of the Parliament. I have enclosed a copy of my letter for your information.

At the very least, bipartisan recognition of the importance of bands like that of the Lancers is significant, despite the fact that many Labor members spoke in opposition to the motion.

I do hope to see action on this issue, and will keep you informed as to the outcome.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Philip Ruddock', written over a diagonal line that extends from the signature down towards the typed name below.

The Hon. Philip Ruddock MP  
Federal Member for Berowra



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**Federal Member for Berowra      Shadow Cabinet Secretary**

16 August 2012

The Hon. Stephen Smith MP  
Minister for Defence  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

You will no doubt be aware that my motion relating to Army Reserve Bands was agreed to by the House earlier today.

Whilst it was disappointing that during debate on the motion some members from the Government approved of the sentiment but nonetheless disagreed with the motion, I was pleased to see that the Government eventually voted to support the motion.

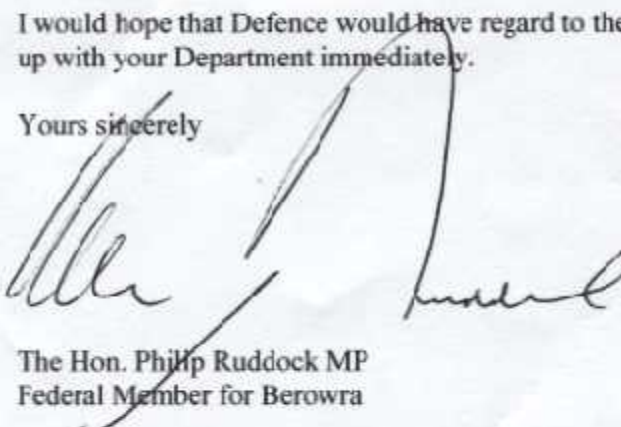
The motion clearly calls for a reinstatement of support for Regimental bands, often of the Army Reserve, like those of the Royal New South Wales Lancers; support which was withdrawn in August 2011 and left to the Regimental Associations to provide.

In a time when, increasingly, regular ADF elements are being moved from urban centres like Sydney, the distance between the ADF and the community is necessarily growing wider. Many will attest to supporting our forces; and rightly so; but few will actually encounter a serviceman or woman in their daily life. The bands of units like the Lancers provide a ready link between our forces and the community; as well as supporting key community events and organisations.

The Strategic Reform Program has cut support to the Army Reserve such that their training and readiness has been dramatically effected; the lack of support for the bands being just one more visual, indeed aural, manifestation of this. Whilst I don't doubt that savings must be made, I don't think that targeting the low-hanging-fruit of the ADF; indeed any element of the ADF, is the way to do that.

I would hope that Defence would have regard to the will of the Parliament, and trust you will take this up with your Department immediately.

Yours sincerely



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