



PRIME MINISTER

99/93

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P.J. KEATING, MP

NEW NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE RSL

I was pleased to be able to meet today with the new National President of the Returned Services League, Major General W. B. (Digger) James.

I congratulated General James on his election to the position on 1 September, and welcomed such an early opportunity to meet him in his new role.

The RSL is an important community voice in Australia, especially on matters such as veterans' affairs and the conditions of service of serving Defence personnel.

I look forward to developing a good and constructive relationship between my Government and the RSL, while acknowledging that we will continue to have our differences over some issues.

In our meeting today, I assured General James that the Labor Government is committed to ensuring that veterans and their dependants are compensated appropriately for war service.

My colleague the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Senator Faulkner, has appointed an independent committee to undertake a thorough review of the veterans' compensation program and to report to him in March next year to enable its recommendations to be considered in the 1994-95 Budget context.

CANBERRA
8 SEPTEMBER, 1993