



The Hon Darren Chester MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

Norman Fry
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Dear Mr Fry

I would like to acknowledge your continued advocacy on behalf of the actions of the late Private William Papuni, Private Michael John Williams and the late Private John David Galley during their service in Vietnam during Operation HERMIT PARK in Phuoc Tuy Province.

I have been advised the operation was a follow-up to locate and destroy elements of 274 VC Regiment contacted in the closing stages of Operation OVERLORD.

I am aware on 25 June 1971, during Operation HERMIT PARK, the crew of an Australian Centurian tank were wounded when their tank was struck by a rocket propelled grenade. The crew was rescued by New Zealand soldiers from 1 Platoon, Victor Six Company of the 4 Royal Australian Regiment / New Zealand (ANZAC) Battalion.

Whilst I understand that the application to have retrospective gallantry awards considered for their actions was unsuccessful, I know they showed great courage and their actions are no less important because of this decision.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the courage of these soldiers and express my gratitude for your service.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

DARREN CHESTER