

NEWS RELEASE



The Hon. Graham West MP
Minister for Juvenile Justice
Minister for Youth
Minister for Volunteering
Minister Assisting the Premier
on Veterans' Affairs

Friday 29 May 2009

Rees Government acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Veterans

Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs, Graham West, today attended the Commemoration Service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Veterans.

Held at the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park South, the ceremony recognised the service and sacrifice of Indigenous veterans.

Mr West said Indigenous Australians and Torres Strait islanders are an important part of Australia's military forces.

"It is important to remember the Indigenous Australians and Torres Strait islanders who served for the freedom we know today, particularly those who paid the ultimate sacrifice," Mr West said.

"While exact numbers are not known, approximately 400 – 500 Indigenous Australians and Torres Strait islanders served in the First World War and as many as 6,000 served in the Second World War.

"The Second World War Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion had approximately 745 Indigenous Australians in August 1943, primarily to protect the Torres Strait.

"The NSW Government acknowledges and thanks these Australians, who have helped to create and preserve the peace and freedom we know today," Mr West said.

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