



NSW KICKS OFF GALLIPOLI CENTENARY PREPARATIONS

Tuesday, 25 May 2010

The NSW Government and the RSL today officially began preparations for the 100th anniversary in 2015 of the Battle of Gallipoli.

Premier Kristina Keneally today announced the establishment of the **NSW Centenary of ANZAC Commemoration Committee**. She made the announcement in a keynote address to delegates of the 94th Annual RSL State Congress at Rooty Hill RSL Club.

The Committee will examine ways in which the people of NSW can play a role in commemorating one of the nation's most historic and significant battles.

"This is about remembering the sacrifices of our servicemen and women," Ms Keneally said.

"In five short years, we will observe the centenary of the landings at ANZAC Cove – the literal dawn of the Anzac Spirit.

"While it will be an event of solemn commemoration, it will be nonetheless, an event no-less-significant than the bi-centenary of 1988 – and it should be planned for accordingly.

"This new Committee will ensure each generation continues to honour the legacy of Australia's military history, especially the formative impact ANZAC experiences had on a young nation."

The committee will be chaired by former NSW Deputy Premier, John Watkins and deputy chair will be former NSW Opposition Leader, Peter Collins.

The Committee will also include the RSL State President Don Rowe OAM and another RSL representative.

The NSW Centenary of ANZAC Commemoration Committee will:

- Undertake wide-ranging consultation to make sure NSW is part of the national commemorations and process leading up to the centenary;
- Provide the NSW government with a program of commemorative, educational and community awareness activities in the lead-up to and during the centenary; and
- Ensure the contributions of women, Aboriginal diggers and others on the homefront who have served the nation are recognised.

Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans Affairs, Frank Terenzini, said the first task of the committee would be to prepare a NSW Government submission to the Commonwealth's recently announced National Commission on the Commemoration of the ANZAC Centenary.

"The committee will consult ex-service organisations, descendants' organisations, schools, local councils and the community to shape our submission to the National Commission," Mr Terenzini said.

"We want to make sure our commemorations will protect the legacy of those who served and represent the scale of the sacrifice made by servicemen and women from this state."

Mr Rowe welcomed the Government's announcement saying the committee would be able to draw on the community's increasing interest in attendance at ANZAC Day services and other commemorations.

Representatives of other ex-service organisations, schools, councils and cultural institutions will also work with the committee to help NSW prepare for the ANZAC Centenary period beginning in 2014.

For more information on the NSW Government's veterans' affairs portfolio visit:

www.veterans.nsw.gov.au