



Charlie McKillop

Liberal for Leichhardt



PO Box 7216, Cairns Qld 4870 Phone 0406 699 506 charlie@charliemckillop.com.au www.charliemckillop.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

12 November 2007

SUPPORTING OUR VETERANS IN FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

Far North Queensland veterans and their families will have more access to support services under the Coalition Government's plan to extend veterans' and families counselling services in Cairns.

Charlie McKillop, the Liberal Party Candidate for Leichhardt announced today that Cairns has been identified as a location that a re-elected Liberal Government will provide enhanced outreach services through the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS).

"The provision of an outreach service in Cairns will make it easier for veterans their families and current serving members of the Australian Defence Force living in Far North Queensland to access specialised, free and confidential counselling and group programme," Charlie McKillop said.

"Far North Queensland is proud to be home to many local veterans, war widows and current serving members who have contributed, and continue to contribute, so much to our community, and to our nation.

"Our nation owes an enormous debt of gratitude to our veterans and their families."

Charlie McKillop said the enhanced outreach service in Cairns is one part of the Coalition's comprehensive plan to support and honour the service of our veterans.

"Veterans and their families living in Leichhardt will also benefit from the announcement that a re-elected Coalition government will establish an Outreach Co-ordinator in Queensland who will ensure effective coordination of the services offered by the VVCS," Charlie McKillop said.

A re-elected Coalition Government will provide funding of \$7 million a year through ESO Assist, which is a new programme to provide assistance to groups such as the Cairns RSL to provide assistance, training and advocacy for veterans, war widows and members of the service community in dealing with the Department of Veterans Affairs," Charlie McKillop said.

A re-elected Coalition Government will also increase financial support for more than 280,000 Australian veterans, including those in Leichhardt by increasing the Utilities Allowance from \$107.20 to \$500 per year from next March.



Charlie McKillop

Liberal for Leichhardt



PO Box 7216, Cairns Qld 4870 Phone 0406 699 506 charlie@charliemckillop.com.au www.charliemckillop.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

"Veterans in Leichhardt will also be able to receive treatment for injuries and illness and support to manage chronic conditions such as arthritis and diabetes at home. A re-elected Coalition will fund practice nurses working under the supervision of a GP to make 800,000 home visits over the next four years to older Australians and veterans, particularly to support those who be otherwise unable to visit their local GP," Charlie McKillop said.

Charlie McKillop said that groups in Leichhardt wishing to commemorate the service and sacrifice of veterans would also be able to access increased funding through the *Saluting Their Service* programme.

"I will be strongly supporting applications by community groups in Leichhardt who want to apply for funding for new *Saluting their Service* grants of up to \$10,000 for projects to commemorate our servicemen and women in the North," Charlie McKillop said.

Charlie McKillop said the Coalition's plan also included new initiatives which recognised the special needs of younger veterans and the families of Vietnam veterans. We are also providing extra support to help Australian Defence Force members who are leaving the ADF.

"The Coalition remains committed to a stand-alone Department of Veterans' Affairs to care for the special needs of veterans and their families, and to maintaining the DVA Veterans' Affairs Network offices across regional Australia.

The Coalition's plan builds on our strong record of support for Australia's veterans, war widows and war widowers. Since coming to office we have nearly doubled funding for veterans' affairs initiatives, to \$11 billion each year.

In the last 18 months alone the Coalition has:

- Helped secure high quality health care for veterans with a Gold or White Card with a further \$600 million;
- Legislated to ensure that 140,000 veterans and ex-service personnel receiving veterans' affairs disability pensions and 114,000 war widows and widowers benefit from more than \$470 million in increased financial assistance; and
- Committed \$13.5 million to fund a world-first study into the intergenerational impact of war service on the health and welfare of the children of Vietnam veterans.



Charlie McKillop

Liberal for Leichhardt



PO Box 7216, Cairns Qld 4870 Phone 0406 699 506 charlie@charliemckillop.com.au www.charliemckillop.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

"These measures, which are providing important support for the local veteran community in Far North Queensland, are only possible because the Coalition has carefully managed Australia's economy," Charlie McKillop said.

"Only the Coalition has the experience and the plan to continue to carefully manage our national economy. This will ensure that our economic continues to grow and that it can weather difficult international circumstances while still providing a strong social dividend such as investment in support for our veterans."

ENDS

MEDIA CONTACT – Charlie McKillop 0406 699 506