



The Hon Darren Chester MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

STATEMENT

Friday 26 February 2021

ANZAC DAY SPIRIT TO CONTINUE IN 2021

ANZAC Day is the most sacred day of commemoration on the Australian calendar.

It provides all Australians with the opportunity to remember and reflect on the service and sacrifice of our past and current service personnel as well as honour the more than 102,000 Australians who have given their lives in service of our nation.

On the health advice of Australian authorities due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19, Anzac Day services overseas will not go ahead as normal in 2021. This includes the Australian and New Zealand-led Anzac Day services in Turkey and the Australian services in France. The day will still be recognised in these countries however, with locally-based officials holding private commemorations in honour of all those who have served our country in uniform, and those who died in service.

This decision was made in the national interest for the protection of all Australians, at home and abroad, and on the advice of Australian health authorities, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and in consultation with host nations.

Along with our own travel ban, we have taken into consideration a number of factors, primarily concerns about the welfare of Australians and other visitors travelling to Anzac Day services as well as views of host nations regarding visitors and large gatherings as well as the impact on health systems of overseas nations.

Here at home, every year on Anzac Day we pause and say 'thank you for your service' to our current and former serving personnel. Despite some limitations on numbers and events to ensure things are done in a COVID-safe way, we can again gather together to commemorate the day this year.

A COVID-safe national service will be held at the Australian War Memorial and broadcast nationally, with all Australians encouraged to tune in and watch on the day.

Around Australia, commemorative activities will be planned, managed and delivered by the RSL, ex-service organisations and community groups, in line with public health guidance in each state or territory.

The Australian Defence Force will provide personnel to support as many services as possible around the country again this year.

Last year Australians came together like never before to mark Anzac Day during the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

And this year, whether it's attending a local service or standing in your driveway and lighting up the dawn, I encourage all Australians to continue the tradition of honouring our service personnel in a way that is solemn and respectful.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has a range of free resources available online for communities and individuals, to help them plan a commemorative service in their local area or at home. Visit the Anzac Portal for more information (anzacportal.dva.gov.au).

Details of the national service will be publicised closer to the date. Enquiries relating to services in your state or territory should be directed to local organisers or the relevant health authority.

ENDS

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