



PRIME MINISTER  
CANBERRA

**MESSAGE: RESERVE FORCES DAY 2006 NATIONAL LAUNCH**

It gives me great pleasure to be able to provide this message for the national launch of Reserve Forces Day 2006.

Reserve Forces Day enables us to acknowledge the contribution of the Australian Defence Force Reserves to Australia's defence and security interests. Throughout this nation's history, our reservists have repeatedly demonstrated their commitment, courage and adaptability while providing vital operational support alongside the fulltime members of the Australian Defence Force.

Australia's reserve forces continue to provide invaluable support to Australian Defence Force operations. In the last few years, a large number of reservists have been deployed overseas and it is fitting that in 2006, Reserve Forces Day will pay special tribute to the overseas service of our reservists. These reservists undertake difficult tasks in dangerous situations and Australia is grateful for their contribution. I would also like to thank the families and employers of our reservists whose support is essential for the ongoing success of the reserve forces.

I am pleased to note that the 2006 Reserve Day activities will also acknowledge the contribution of civilians who have volunteered to serve overseas, in many cases alongside our Australian Defence Force members. They too risk their own safety so they may provide help to those in need. Australia is indebted to these people and I thank them for their commitment.

The members of the Reserve Forces Day Council should be commended for the wonderful work they are doing for Reserve Forces Day. I wish the Australian Defence Force Reserves and the Reserve Forces Day Council every success for their activities in 2006.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'John Howard'.

(John Howard)