



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

RESERVE FORCES DAY PARADE 2014

I am pleased to provide this message for the Reserve Forces Day Parade 2014.

For over a century, Australian Defence Force Reserves have served our country with distinction.

The men and women of our armed forces protect our country and advance its values.

This is an opportunity to honour their work, and to pay particular tribute to our early Reservists who answered the call to war.

We have begun to commemorate the Anzac Centenary and it is fitting that this Reserve Forces Day Parade remembers Australia's first military actions – the capture of German territories in the Pacific.

The Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force that undertook those actions were volunteers; enlisted from the naval reserves, militia and an infantry battalion in Sydney.

For them, the war began in German New Guinea. Their capture of Rabaul was our first victory, but it was our first loss. Six Australians were killed and four were wounded.

Overshadowed by the defeat of Gallipoli and the victory on the Western Front, the feats of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force are seldom feted. Today we remember them for putting on our nation's uniform and volunteering to defend our country and its values.

We also acknowledge all Reservists, past and present. Members of our armed forces have done what most of us are never asked to do: they have been prepared to put their lives on the line for our country.

On behalf of all Australians, I salute you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tony Abbott'.

The Hon Tony Abbott MP
Prime Minister of Australia

24 June 2014