Dear Principal

Ballot Arrangements for Attendance at Anzac Day Commemorations, 25 April 2015 - Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey

On behalf of the Prime Minister, I have announced ballot arrangements for Australians planning to attend Anzac Day commemorations at Gallipoli on 25 April 2015.

The Turkish Government has entrusted the Australian and New Zealand governments to manage the events on 25 April 2015, which include the Dawn Service at the Anzac Commemorative Site and subsequent services at Lone Pine and Chunuk Bair. The Australian Government has expressed its gratitude to the Turkish Government for allowing us to hold Anzac Day commemorations on its soil, and for the level of support it provides to the annual commemorations.

Ballot arrangements represent a fair, transparent and equitable approach to the allocation of attendance passes to the commemorations, to ensure a secure, safe and comfortable visitor experience, while maintaining the dignity and solemnity of the centenary commemorations.

The Anzac Commemorative Site can safely hold 10,500 people, and in 2015 this will include places for 8,000 Australians, 2,000 New Zealanders and up to 500 official representatives of all countries that served in the Gallipoli campaign.

The Government carefully considered options for the ballot, drawing on feedback received from members of the public, the veteran and Defence communities, tour operators and other key stakeholders, as part of a public consultation undertaken in 2012.

Some of the places available to Australians will be reserved for special representatives including:

- Widows of Australian First World War veterans – they do not need to participate in the ballot and will be included as part of Australia’s official representatives, with a companion if fit to travel.
- Five per cent of places allocated through the ballot will be reserved for Australian direct descendants of veterans of the Gallipoli campaign with preference being given to the sons and daughters of Gallipoli veterans (800 passes in total).
- Five per cent of places allocated through the ballot will be reserved for Australian veterans with qualifying service or who have been deployed on operations outside of Australia, whether they are warlike, non-warlike or peacetime operations (800 passes in total).
- Five per cent of places will be set aside from the ballot process for representative secondary school children and their chaperones, to be allocated and managed through the states and territories (400 passes in total).
The remaining (3,000 double passes) will be available to all Australians who meet the eligibility criteria for the ballot.

The following criteria will apply to the ballot:

- Applicants must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia to register, but do not need to be living in Australia at the time of registration.
- Applicants must be a minimum of 18 years of age on, or before, 25 April 2015 to register.
- Applicants can only register once.
- People successful in the ballot will be issues a double pass – the accompanying pass holder does not need to be an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia.
- No additional passes will be provided to an individual that is successful in the ballot.
- Pass holders must make all arrangements for their travel and cover all costs including flights, accommodation, transport and travel insurance, etc.

The ballot is expected to be open for registrations on 1 November 2013 and close on 31 January 2014. Details on how to register will be available later in the year following the engagement of a provider to conduct the ballot. Advice on the ballot outcome will be provided to individuals in March 2014, to ensure that those who are successful have enough time to arrange and pay for their trip to Gallipoli.

Further information on the ballot arrangements is available on the Gallipoli 2015 website at www.gallipoli2015.dva.gov.au.

As outlined above, five percent of Australian places (400 places in total) will be available outside of the ballot for representative secondary school students and their chaperones, from across Australia. The Australian Government will work with the states and territories on how these places will be distributed and allocated, which may be through existing competitions such as Premier’s or Chief Minister’s Anzac awards. It is not possible to provide advice at this time, as to whether individual school groups wishing to travel could be accommodated in the allocation of places. Details for the allocation of places to secondary students and chaperones will be announced later this year and advice of arrangements would be communicated directly to all Australian secondary schools at that time.

Attending Anzac Day commemorative services at Gallipoli in 2015 will be a truly moving and unique experience for any Australian, but it will also be the most busy and difficult time to visit the Gallipoli Peninsula.

The Gallipoli campaign lasted eight months from April to December 1915, and I encourage Australians to consider visiting Gallipoli at another time during 2015, which would allow easier access to the battlefields and cemeteries and provide greater opportunities for personal reflection.

A host of activities and initiatives at a domestic and international level will also occur from 2014 to 2018 to commemorate the Centenary of Australia’s involvement in the First World War. For more information please visit the Anzac Centenary website at www.anzaccentenary.gov.au

Yours sincerely

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WARREN SNOWDON
29 May 2013