

VETERANS — POZIERES CENTENARY

2938. Ms M.M. Quirk to the Minister for Veterans:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the action of Australian soldiers from the 1st, 2nd and 4th battalions at Pozieres in France will not be honoured for its Centenary in 2016, but will be combined with that of Villers–Bretonneux in 2018, being given an “annexe” in the new Monash Interpretative Centre, being built for the Centenary of Villers Bretonneux?
- (2) Is the Minister further aware that Pozieres will have only a ceremonial activity in 2016 and there have been no funds allocated by the Federal government to more formally commemorate on site the death of 7,000 Australian soldiers and the wounding of countless more at Pozieres in 1916?
- (3) If the Minister is aware, has the Minister made representations to the Federal Minister for the Anzac commemorations to redress this unfortunate oversight?
- (4) If the Minister was not aware, will the Minister now undertake to make such representations so that the service of Western Australians who fought and or died at Pozieres are appropriately honoured?

Mr J.M. Francis replied:

- (1) The actions of all Australian battalions who fought at Pozieres, France, are eternally remembered both at the Pozieres Windmill Site and at the National Australian Memorial at Villers–Bretonneux. A number of services are held on ANZAC Day in France each year including an ANZAC Day Dawn Service at the Australian National Memorial at Villers–Bretonneux.
- (2) Yes
- (3) No
- (4) All battlefields have meaning. The amount of new money spent on commemorating one battlefield over another, or whether a battlefield has a visitor centre or memorial park is not measurement of its significance or place in the national consciousness.