

# THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA NATIONAL COUNCIL



Patron – in – Chief Her Majesty the Queen  
Patron: His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC FTSE

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25 May 2020

The Honourable Scott Morrison  
Prime Minister of Australia  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
R1-4-C001  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

### **REJECTION OF THE HONOURS AND AWARDS TRIBUNAL – SEAMAN TEDDY SHEEAN FOR AWARD OF THE VICTORIA CROSS POSTHUMOUSLY**

For many years, the Naval family has worked to champion the cause of Ordinary Seaman Eddy Sheean in having him recognised for his extraordinary valour aboard HMAS ARMIDALE on 1 December 1942. His heroism led to the potential saving of the lives of countless shipmates who were adrift in the sea as their ship was sinking and were being strafed by Japanese aircraft.

After earlier attempts to have his valour recognised by the award of the Victoria Cross, an appeal was launched by the Tasmanian Government in 2019 under the auspices of the Honourable Guy Barnett MP – Minister for Veteran Affairs, Tasmania. We have discovered only in the last few days with the official release of the findings of that appeal that the Tribunal found in favour of the Appeal and recommended that Ordinary Seaman Teddy Sheean be posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

It is incomprehensible that after such a finding by the Body set up specifically to investigate such matters and tasked with providing recommendations to Government without fear or favour, that the Government has overruled their findings. The wider naval family across Australia, led by the Naval Association of Australia, wishes to formally request a redress of the decision and will now lead a campaign across the broad Ex-service community to marshal our means to have the recommendation accepted by the Government.

We see this decision as letting down those who serve or have served our country, in both war and peace, at a time when the country needs all the cohesiveness it can muster, to get through these very

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difficult times. I urge you to reconsider, before the groundswell of public opinion will demand the reversal of your decision. We look forward to hearing from you positively soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Graham Savage', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Graham Savage  
National President  
Naval Association of Australia