



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**TONY WINDSOR MP**  
**INDEPENDENT**  
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

Shop 5  
259 Peel Street  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**All Mail:** PO Box 963  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**Ph:** (02) 6761 3080

**Toll Free:** 1300 301 839

**Fax:** (02) 6761 3380

**e-mail:** [Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au)

**Web Page:** [www.tonywindsor.com.au](http://www.tonywindsor.com.au)

## Media Release

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### **Fight to save Armoured Fighting Vehicles at 12/16<sup>th</sup> Hunter River Lancers**

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor will next week take the fight to keep the Armoured Fighting Vehicles based at the 12/16<sup>th</sup> Hunter River Lancers to the Federal Parliament in Canberra.

Mr Windsor has been inundated with mail from concerned members of the community drawing to his attention the proposal to remove all Armoured Fighting Vehicles from the Reservists and replace them with the Bushmaster which is basically a truck.

“It is very hard to believe that in these uncertain times, Australia is downgrading the skill level of those people who would be required to ‘round out’ the regular army units by removing the Armoured Fighting Vehicles – a vehicle used to train Reservists to the level of Armoured Crewmen – a level that takes the Army a considerable time to fully train to.

The proposal to replace them with Bushmaster vehicles, which is basically a truck, will mean the proficiency levels of our Reservists will drop as constant practice is required to prevent poor performance,” Mr Windsor said.

Views have been expressed to Mr Windsor that while the Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Hill, has indicated that the Bushmaster would be used to motorise an Infantry Brigade, it is still a firmly held belief within the Army (particularly the Armoured Corps) that the replacement of the Reserve Armoured Fighting Vehicles will take place.

“I have already conveyed to the Minister the concerns that people involved have raised with me and I intend to raise the issue in the Parliament next week.

Our Reservists are a vital part of Australia’s Defence Force and we must ensure that they are trained properly on the equipment that forms a big part of our Nation’s defence.

With so many of our regular forces on overseas missions, now more than ever is the time to make sure our Reservists are fully trained for any emergency,” Mr Windsor said.

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***For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 66 88 68***