



**2 September 2018**

**Guy Barnett, Minister for Veterans' Affairs**

# **Commemorating the Battle for Australia Day**

The 'Battle for Australia' Day, on 3 September, is an important date to commemorate the service and sacrifice of those who served in the defence of Australia in 1942 and 1943 during World War Two.

In 2008, the Battle for Australia Day was proclaimed to remember the Australian and American forces who were heavily engaged in the victorious Battle of Milne Bay, in New Guinea, on 3 September 1942.

The Battle of Milne Bay was the first defeat of Japanese forces on land and a turning point in the war in the Pacific. Victory at Milne Bay was strategically important, as the advancing Japanese forces recognised Milne Bay was a crucial stepping stone for advancing to Port Moresby.

The battle for Kokoda in 1942 was critical to stopping the Japanese advance South to Port Moresby. At the time Papua New Guinea was an Australian territory.

I was pleased to walk to Kokoda track with two veterans and other Tasmanians in 2008 to honour our veterans.

The Battle for Australia Day also recognises the threats to Australia and the roles many Australians played in serving our nation and supporting the war effort.

Over 100,000 members of the Civil Construction Corps built roads and aerodromes in outback areas to try and create a supply line to Darwin.