

**Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage**

**AIDE MEMOIRE**

**PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL EREBUS MONUMENT**

<b>Date:</b>	20/10/2016	<b>MCH Contact:</b>	Kartini Havell Acting Manager, Heritage Operations 9(2)(a)
<b>BR Number:</b>	BR2016/459	<b>TRIM Ref:</b> <b>TRIM Folder:</b>	D-0685991 2010-09500

**Purpose**

- 1 To update you on the meeting held at MCH on Tuesday 18 October with Rev. Dr Richard Waugh, Aviation Historian and Chaplain in the aviation industry, and Captain Allan Boyce, Past President of the Royal Aeronautical Society NZ Division Inc.

**Background**

- 2 Rev. Dr Waugh has written to you twice this year promoting his request for the Government to lead and fund a process to establish a National Erebus Monument to be unveiled during the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Erebus accident on 28 November 2019. Whilst there are a number of dispersed memorials to some of the victims of the Erebus disaster in New Zealand, at Antarctica and in some overseas countries, there is no one place where all the names of the passengers and crew are listed. Waugh's position is that this is an anomaly, and that a national memorial would offer surviving family members of those killed in the disaster a place for them to "gather for contemplation, prayer and reflection".
- 3 Your initial response to the proposal noted there had been no requests from family members for such a monument, and that the Government had already decided consideration would be given to commemorations only on a 25 year cycle of 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup> or 100<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. You indicated, however, that there was nothing to stop interested parties themselves organising their own commemorations outside this framework or instituting their own working parties to fundraise for specific memorials if there is sufficient interest.
- 4 In his second letter Rev Dr Waugh advised the formation of an Advisory Committee, the preparation of feature stories for media release, and initiatives to locate relatives of the 257 victims. He suggested the Ministry should take the lead in appointing a special committee to consult, plan, and fundraise for a national memorial as soon as possible. You responded that it was not appropriate for a government agency to take the lead, but encouraged him to

brief the Ministry on his plans. Tuesday's meeting was arranged for him to do this.

## **Key Points Raised**

### ***Advisory Committee***

- 5 An advisory committee has been established comprising the following:
- Rev. Dr Richard Waugh, aviation historian and chaplain
  - Captain Allan Boyce, a former Air New Zealand pilot who was a standby officer for the Erebus flight
  - John King, Editor of New Zealand Aviation News and author of a book on air accidents
  - Graeme McConnell, designer of the National Memorial for the Kaimai Disaster
  - Alec Waugh, retired Police Superintendent

Lady June Hillary, widow of Peter Mulgrew who was on the Erebus flight, has agreed to be Patron. It is anticipated that there may be a need to augment the committee as plans progress. The next committee meeting is on 28 October.

### ***Media/Communications***

- 6 Waugh and Boyce stress they have no intention for their campaign to be used to comment in any way on the causes of the accident itself.
- 7 A website has been developed and is almost ready to be launched. This will be done in connection with a suite of media releases, most probably at the end of this month. People with a connection to the disaster will be invited to register on the website. The information provided will be treated as confidential but will enable wider consultation. Waugh noted that the media was already aware of some aspects of the announcement and he was conscious that they could be unpredictable and may publish the information outside the proposed timetable, and draw connections to the controversy around the accident.
- 8 Waugh challenges the suggestion that the 40<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the disaster is not as significant as the 50<sup>th</sup>. He notes parents and surviving spouses in particular are already elderly, and that many of them are unlikely to be alive for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He wishes to make the case for inclusion of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the Tier One list of commemorations to recognise this. We explained that a Cabinet decision would be necessary to amend the approved Tier One list of commemorations.

### ***Contact with the Prime Minister***

- 10 We are advised that an informal discussion has taken place between a committee member and the Prime Minister and that the Committee may possibly call on him at his electorate office in the future.

### ***Forward Planning***

- 11 Waugh and Boyce seek guidance on possible ways forward, saying they wish to follow process, but it was clear that an expectation remains that the Government will come on board with both the planning and funding.

## Comment

- 12 The Ministry's perception is that the Advisory Committee is at a very early stage of planning. Its structure is informal, and includes no family representation. The committee has had only limited informal (email) contact with Air New Zealand and does not seem to have high expectations of Air New Zealand input. Waugh and Boyce do seem to recognise the need to determine the level of family interest in proceeding with the project.
- 13 In our discussions we sought to temper expectations, in particular in regard to the Commemorations list, but also with regard to government funding and participation in the planning of the proposed memorial.
- 14 We suggested that the Committee may wish to consider whether any of the existing memorials could be enhanced to include the full list of Erebus victims' names, identified as a priority, and we made some suggestions in this regard. This would have the advantage of reducing the amount of funding needing to be raised, and could be easily managed if agreement could be reached with those responsible for the existing monuments.
- 15 We provided Waugh and Boyce with a sample design brief, should they wish to call for memorial designs, and encouraged them to discuss their plans with the Institute of Architects. We also asked whether the Committee had considered using other public fundraising mechanisms. Waugh did not think that this would be an appropriate strategy for their proposal.
- 16 We will prepare initial lines of response for media enquiries to your office.
- 17 We will continue to communicate with the Advisory Committee and provide advice where appropriate, and we will monitor the public response to their forthcoming announcements. We will advise you if they wish to escalate engagement with the Government.

9(2)(a)

Kartini Havell  
Acting Manager Heritage Operations

Seen by Hon. Maggie Barry ONZM  
Minister for Arts, Culture & Heritage

22/12/2016

PR