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MINISTER NEEDS TO EXPLAIN WHY SHE MISLED SENATE OVER
DECISION TO DENY TEDDY SHEEAN A VICTORIA CROSS

The Morrison Government has serious questions to answer [after revelations](#) that the Chair of the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (DHAAT) has rebuked Defence Minister Linda Reynolds for her statement about a decision to deny Tasmanian war hero Edward 'Teddy' Sheean a posthumous Victoria Cross for Australia (VC).

Last week in the Senate, Minister Reynolds said the DHAAT's 2019 review "did not present any compelling new evidence" that might support reconsideration of awarding Ordinary Seaman Teddy Sheean a VC.

In an extraordinary intervention, DHAAT Chair Mark Sullivan has reportedly written to Minister Reynolds and described her statement to the Senate as "misleading and in need of correction".

Mr Sullivan also reportedly told Minister Reynolds that she "misrepresented" facts and made "false" statements, and that contrary to her claims, the 2019 review recommended the VC be awarded to Teddy Sheean based on new evidence.

This directly contradicts Minister Reynolds' justification for denying Teddy Sheean a VC.

Labor expects Minister Reynolds to immediately address these matters and provide an explanation to the Senate when it next meets on Wednesday, 10 June.

The Minister's statement last week was deeply disappointing and confusing for Teddy Sheean's family, supporters and our veteran community.

Compounding this confusion, we now learn the Morrison Government ignored and mischaracterised the advice of the independent DHAAT, which unanimously found Sheean met the eligibility criteria for a VC based on compelling new evidence of conspicuous gallantry and valour in the presence of the enemy, which was comparable to the actions of other VC recipients.

Minister Reynolds needs to clarify the record and reconsider the decision to refuse Teddy a VC.

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Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra.