



Major General F.A. McLachlan, AM
 Head Modernisation and Strategic Planning -Army

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CJU
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Dear CJU ,

I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you recently in Melbourne. I felt it important I follow-up with more formal correspondence to confirm a number of points I made during the meeting.


Most importantly I want to acknowledge the abuse and suffering you experienced as a young soldier at the Army Apprentice School. At a time when for you, as a soldier under 18 years of age, the Army was acting with the responsibilities of a parent you were left in an environment that was inadequately supervised and the result was routine and systemic abuse by other trainees for you and many of your peers. Your own role in attempting to protect many of your peers drew even further adverse attention toward you. I respect your toughness in surviving this abuse and protecting your fellow trainees.

Your Army let you down and you have carried the resulting burden without assistance or acknowledgement for too long. I know that your inability to talk about the abuse you suffered with your family has added to your burden. Your courage in facing your memories and engaging with the Defence Abuse Response Task-force should be an inspiration to your family. I also give you my pledge that I have taken motivation from your courage to ensure we do not expose young soldiers in our care today to the same risks.

I know it is extremely difficult for you to be proud of your Army service but I hope following your engagement with the Task-force you can return to a place where you are proud to be counted as a Digger. To complete more than 11 years in an organisation that failed you when you were very young is a remarkable display of resilience. I have no doubt there are more than a few soldiers whose service was made easier because you looked out for them, even if this came at a personal cost to you.

Finally, you will see enclosed a certificate for promotion that retrospectively promotes you to the rank of Corporal with effect your last day of service. This is symbolic recognition that you had the skills and capacity to be a Corporal in the Army but that you were denied the opportunity because of your premature departure from the Army. I trust that this recognition enables you and your family to reflect on your achievements and contribution to Army and the nation.

On behalf of the Army I apologise for the abuse you suffered in the Army. I ask that you be proud of your service and wish you all the best in the future.

Sincerely,


FA McLachlan, AM
Major General
Head of Modernisation and Strategic Planning - Army

26 August 2015

Enclosure:

1. Certificate of Promotion – CJU