

National Trust of Australia



NATIONAL TRUST

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National Trust concern over protection of Anzac war dead heightens

In early July the ACT National Trust wrote a letter to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Mr Bruce Billson, regarding the lack of conservation and protection of the unrecovered remains of Anzac soldiers at Gallipoli.

A letter from the National President of the Australian Council of National Trusts, Mr Patrick Comben expressing the same concerns was also sent to the Prime Minister, Mr Howard.

The Heritage Officer of the ACT National Trust, Dr Peter Dowling, who recently discovered the remains of a soldier eroding from a trench in one of the most visited sections of the Anzac area, said today that he was utterly dismayed at the lack of response from the Minister of Veterans' Affairs and the Prime Minister.

"We have given them ten working days to respond to our letter and up to today we have not heard a word from them. I honestly thought, that given the gravity of this situation and the place that Anzac has in Australia's history and psyche that our political leaders would have at least responded positively to our requests."

Dr Dowling stated that these young soldiers whose bodies have never been recovered, who have no headstones to identify them, deserve better than to have their remains left exposed on the side of busy roads where they could be crushed under the wheels of tourist coaches or even worse, picked up and removed by unscrupulous collectors.

The National Trust will now be seeking a meeting with Mr Billson asking him to take urgent action towards protecting and conserving the remains of the Anzac soldiers.

For further information: www.act.nationaltrust.org.au

Or call: **Dr Peter Dowling** on (02) 6230 0533 or 0417 233 194
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