MEDICAL SPECIALISTS FOR VIETNAM DUTY

Statement by the Minister for the Army,
the Hon Malcolm Fraser, M.P.

Senior specialist CMF medical officers are to serve on continuous military service for short tours of duty in Vietnam.

Announcing this today, the Minister for the Army, Mr. Malcolm Fraser, said the officers would serve for a minimum of 14 weeks' full time duty, of which 12 weeks would be spent in Vietnam, after which time they would be replaced, on a rotation basis.

They would be in the categories of surgeon, anaesthetist, physician and pathologist, and would serve with Regular Army field medical units.

However they would retain their CMF rank of major, lieutenant-colonel or colonel, from which rank groups they would be selected in Australia.

Australian troops in Vietnam were already receiving the best possible general medical attention from officers and men of the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps.

Specialist treatment, however, was largely provided from U.S. resources, and a turnover of Australian CMF specialists on full-time duty would allow the Australian Force to become less reliant on American medical facilities, at the same time giving our own officers valuable field experience under operational conditions.

A surgeon and a pathologist were already serving in Vietnam under the short term scheme, and other specialists would enter that theatre in the near future.

Lists: A and B

Further information:

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