



**ANDREW ROBATHAN MP**  
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE PERSONNEL, WELFARE AND VETERANS

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I am delighted that my ministerial responsibilities include the support given to the families of those serving in our armed forces. I am impressed by the bravery, professionalism and, above all, the commitment that our people display in everything they do – day in day out. I also have huge respect for the sacrifices they make when leaving those they love when duty calls.

So it's right that this government supports those families who support our men and women in uniform, support which is so crucial for effective operations. I include in this not only the support given by spouses but also by parents, siblings and the wider family.

As we face the future together I do want to find better ways of doing things. You do not need me to tell you that money is tight. As with any budget, when you have run out of money you stop spending, and if you want something more you have to decide what you are going to give up to pay for it. We need to look carefully at what we do and why we do it to ensure that we are doing the right things to support serving and former serving personnel and their families.

This government believes in the moral obligation to treat those who serve, their families, and veterans with fairness and dignity. I value the contribution of the Families Federations and look forward to working with you on those big issues affecting armed forces' families. I welcome your practical suggestions to reduce the inevitable burden that separation entails, and look forward to being your champion within government.

**ANDREW ROBATHAN MP**