



**VIETNAM VETERANS' FEDERATION
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH INC.**

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter is to inform you of a facility that your members/personnel could utilize if they wanted to.

The Vietnam Veterans Federation S.A. (VVFSA) have a bush Retreat at Alawoona in the Murray Mallee 34 kms from Loxton. This camp is named Camp Andrew Russell (CAR) after SGT Andrew "Drew" Russell the first Australian killed in action in Afghanistan. The retreat is a veteran support initiative and dedicated camping/retreat area designed for all war, peacekeeping veterans and first responders, along with their families. It was established by ex-service personnel to provide a supportive, affordable retreat in honour of "Drew" Russell. It provides a place of rest, remembrance and community for veterans, peacekeepers and first responders. It is located on 20 acres of land donated by a local farmer just off the Karoonda Highway at Alawoona.

The facility is managed by VVFSa with fees at \$8 per night per person to help support the site. This letter is to introduce Phil Scroop a VVFSa committee member who can answer any questions you might have about the camp.

Yours faithfully,

**Mal Thiele OAM
President**

Camp Andrew Russell

Camp Andrew Russell stands as a quiet, enduring tribute to Sergeant Andrew 'Drew' Russell of the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR), who was killed in action in Afghanistan during Australia's first deployment to the country. At the time he was the only Australian casualty, and his loss was deeply felt not only by his family—Bob, Jan, his wife Kylie and daughter Leisa—but also by the broader veteran community.

Origins and Purpose

The idea for the camp emerged around 2002, born from a desire within the veteran community to create a peaceful retreat where veterans and their families could reconnect with nature and find respite from the pressures of everyday life. Early attempts to secure land were unsuccessful, and the concept remained only an aspiration for a time.

Momentum returned in 2003 when Don Viney of "Vinedale" in Alawoona generously offered ten to fifteen acres of scrubland—raw, sandy, and overgrown—to the Vietnam Veterans Federation (Veterans Off Road Group). This land would become the foundation of what is now **Camp Andrew Russell**.

Camp Andrew Russell -Caretaker / Manager Recruitment

Camp Andrew Russell (C.A.R.) is a wellness retreat dedicated to supporting veterans of all conflicts and first responders. Located at Alawoona, 32 km south of Loxton on the Karoonda Highway in South Australia, the camp offers a peaceful environment where guests can take time away from the pressures of everyday life.

Two years ago, C.A.R. underwent a major upgrade to improve comfort, accessibility, and capacity. New facilities now include:

- Male female, and disability toilets and showers,
- Hot and cold water amenities
- A fully equipped camp kitchen
- A recreation building
- A maintenance workshop
- A Storage shed
- Eleven caravan sites
- A reliable water supply from a solar-powered bore

The Vietnam Veterans Federation SA is now seeking expressions of interest from suitable individuals to take on the role of Caretaker/ Manager for periods of three months, or as negotiated within a twelve-month cycle.

Who We Are Looking For

Applicants should, ideally, be:

- Ex-Military personnel
- First Responders – Police, Ambulance, Fire Services, etc.
- Of good honest character with appropriate references

Caretakers must provide their own accommodation (caravan or motorhome). A dedicated power point is available a washing machine is also included for the on-site manager.

Duties Include:

- Cleaning and maintaining the toilets, showers, and camp kitchen
- Keeping the grounds tidy
- Collecting firewood for winter use
- Welcoming guests and managing bookings
- Collecting donations (\$8 per person per night)
- Completing banking in Loxton
- Using a supplied credit card for camp-related commodities and fuel.

This position is voluntary, as both Camp Andrew Russell and the Vietnam Veterans Federation operate on a not-for-profit basis. However, the role offers a meaningful opportunity to support fellow veterans and first responders while living in a peaceful rural setting.

How to Apply:

Please contact the Vietnam Veterans Federation South Australian Branch Inc

31 Norfolk Road, Marion, SA 5043

Phone: 08 8296 2411

Email: vvfsa@vvfsa.au

PHIL SCROOP. COMMITTEE MEMBER OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS
FEDERATION SA INC

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Images courtesy VVFASA and SNAFU.

