



Video transcript of the message from the Chief of the Australian Army, Lieutenant General Rick Burr, AO, DSC, MVO, on the Inspector-General Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry

I never imagined I would be leading our Army through one of its toughest challenges, when I joined 38 years ago. But here we are — together.

We have received the Inquiry report into allegations of misconduct by members of our Special Forces community, while on operations in Afghanistan between 2005 and 2016. The findings are disturbing and extremely serious.

As the Chief of Army and a Special Forces Officer, I have questioned why did this happen? What could have been done to prevent this? And how do we ensure this does not happen again? — anywhere in our Army.

Some of our people strayed from our values by not operating lawfully, ethically or responsibly. These individuals will be held to account.

I am deeply concerned that some people did not feel empowered or safe to speak up sooner when they saw or knew of misconduct. Not holding each other to account and tolerating misconduct is not what we stand for. Although it was not everyone it affects us all.

The findings are not easy to read or hear. But dealing with them and learning from this experience is essential for our profession. As we hold ourselves to account, we must understand what has happened, and commit to restoring trust with the nation we have sworn to defend.

Trust is critical to our profession and our standing as a national institution. Trust in each other, ethical leadership at all levels and being our best selves everyday strengthens our culture.

Remember, our culture is what we allow it to be. We own it, we all contribute to it, and we define what we stand for. Our culture is capability.

The Army has been working hard on cultural renewal. But there is always more work to do. This is why *Good Soldiering* is so important. We must always live by our values and act with integrity. Our profession demands this.

I have every confidence that we will emerge from this experience a stronger, more capable and effective Army. But it is up to us.

Regardless of when you joined our Army, whether you deployed to Afghanistan or not, whether you were involved or not, this Inquiry is something we all live with. We inherit it, we own it.

In our Army we share the good with the bad. We must continue to learn and improve. We owe it to those who are serving today, but also to those who have served in our past, and those who will serve in our future.

I acknowledge this has been a tough road for many people. I'd like to thank families and loved ones - everyone who provides support to our people.



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I commend those who had the courage, to provide information to the Inquiry.

As we navigate our way forward, please continue to look out for each other. If you need help ask. You will be supported. There is a wide range of welfare support available.

I continue to be inspired by the overwhelming majority of professional men and women who serve with pride and integrity in our Army. Your commitment and the difference you make to others is appreciated, and has not gone unrecognised.

Every day we spend in service, we must live *Good Soldiering*. We must all to be courageous, strong, respectful, and commit to a better future.