



His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

## 104<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Fromelles

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We pause today to remember and honour the service and sacrifice of Australian and British soldiers who fought in the Battle of Fromelles on the Western Front on 19-20 July 1916. This battle in northern France saw the largest loss of Australian life in battle in a 24-hour period – 1,917 Australian soldiers were killed.

In reflecting on the soldiers' service and sacrifice, we also acknowledge the impact it had on families, friends and communities back home during and after World War I. For families of soldiers killed in battle, the impact was devastating. For families of returned servicemen, the impact was often a silent emotional struggle, as it is today for many families of veterans.

Today's commemoration is held against the backdrop of a global health pandemic. Due to restrictions, many families are unable to attend this ceremony.

In an echo of the sentiments that created the ceiling of the Hall of Memory, relatives of soldiers who fought in the Battle of Fromelles have been invited to provide the names of the soldiers they are commemorating for placement on a Commemorative Star to be cast into the Well of Contemplation. I congratulate Families and Friends of the First AIF on this innovative initiative.

But no matter the circumstances, the symbolism of today's event and the resolve of those Australians here today, along with representatives of France, the United Kingdom, Belgium and New Zealand, to commemorate those who died in the service of their respective nations will ensure their sacrifice is not forgotten.

Lest we forget.