



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

103rd anniversary of the Battle of Fromelles

The first battle involving Australian units on the Western Front following the unsuccessful Gallipoli campaign resulted in the largest loss of life in any 24-hour period of Australia's history.

On the evening of 19-20 July 1916 in a field in northern France, Australian and British soldiers were decimated by the Germans who occupied a strong defensive position.

In the Battle of Fromelles, 1,917 Australian soldiers were killed or died of their wounds. There were 5,533 casualties in total.

The mortal wounds and emotional toll inflicted on a battlefield more than 100 years ago are difficult to comprehend.

Today, we rightly pause and reflect on the sacrifice made by so many soldiers.

Importantly, we also remember the transformative impact it had on family — wives, partners, children, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts and uncles — and on the many descendants participating in this commemoration.

On this, the 103rd anniversary of the Battle of Fromelles, our nation pays tribute to the service and bravery of ordinary Australians who gave their all for our country.

Lest we forget.