



Ms Miriam Reilly,  
Meetings Administrator  
South Dublin County Council

16 Mar 2021

Dear Ms Reilly,

Thank you for your letter (Your Ref M09/1120) on the subject of Jadotville Medals, dated 05<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

The service by Irish Defence Forces personnel in the Congo has made a lasting contribution to the history of the Defence Forces (DF) and its proud tradition of peacekeeping. The Irish soldiers who served on the mission paved the way for the Irish Peacekeepers of today, and they leave behind a significant legacy.

The siege at Jadotville is one of a number of significant events that took place during the at period of Defence Forces involvement in ONUC (Opération des Nations Unies au Congo). The regulation which governs the award of decorations sets explicit time limitations on the award of medals – specifically, not later than two years after the performance of the act in respect of the Military Medal for Gallantry (MMG) ; and not later than four years after the performance of the act in respect of the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM).

In recognition of the service by Defence Force personnel with the United Nations in the Congo, Boards were convened in 1962 and in 1965 in accordance with Defence Force Regulations, to consider meritorious promotions, and to recommend the award of medals for Gallantry, and Distinguished Service. A number of awards were made as a result of this process. As matters stand, there is no regulatory mechanism to re-visit this process and make additional awards to those who served in Jadotville, as the issue now falls outside the prescribed time-frame and procedure.

However, on 02 December 2017, following a decision by the then Minister for Defence, the surviving veterans of A Coy 35 Inf Bn, and the next of kin/ immediate descendants of those who died in the intervening years, were honoured with *An Bonn Jadotville*. This is a very significant medal which, together with the accompanying citation, recognises the deeds and actions of those who served at Jadotville, regardless of rank or role. No other collective award of this nature (i.e. recognising leadership, courage, bravery and professional performance) has been issued by the State to date, and its uniqueness and importance should not be understated.

Arising from an announcement by the Minister of Defence in Seanad Éireann on 11 November 2020, the Chief of Staff convened an Independent Review Group on the Battle of Jadotville. The Review Group is engaging, on a voluntary basis, all stakeholders, interested parties, and, in particular, all veterans from 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion, ONUC. The Independent Review Group will examine, report and make recommendations in relation to the 'Battle of Jadotville' from 13 to 17 September 1961.

I would like to thank you for your correspondence, and for your interest in the Defence Forces, our members and our Veterans.



Yours sincerely,



**D McKeivitt**  
**Lt Col**  
**OIC A Administration**  
**Human Resource Branch.**

