



Australian Government
Department of Social Services

Senator Marielle Smith
Chair
Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee
Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator

Correction of evidence/clarification of evidence in the Estimates Official Committee Hansard of 15 February 2023.

I am writing to correct evidence/clarify an answer provided to the Committee during its examination of the Social Services Portfolio in relation to Outcome 2, Program 2.1: Families and Communities.

During the welcome from the Chair and my request to have the AIFS Opening Statement tabled, I said the following and request these changes:

1. I have with me our research director, Dr Rae Kaspiew, whose areas include the Gambling Research Centre and family law, another area of significant work for us at the moment, as the reforms have just come through. We're very pleased to inform with our evidence a lot of those reform proposals, particularly in relation to the court's understandings in the future being child centred rather than parent rights centred. Dr Kaspiew is also working, amongst other things, on our family defence area, another significant area where we at the moment are trying to support the government's aims in considering why or how we have still more terminations than recruits from the defence forces, in terms of people retiring and leaving. We're tracking for them the role of families in making those decisions about one of their family members retiring from the Australian Defence Force.

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the role of families in making those decisions about one of their family members retiring from the Australian Defence Force.

2. He's also in charge of the humanitarian migrant settler experience in Australia, which is another 10-year longitudinal study.

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3. All of our research feeds into those inquiries, which, in turn, we hope will—and usually do—lead to recommendations, which in turn would work up new policy or help us to evaluate what's going on.

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4. and, right now in particular we are because we've got to this mature stage of the longitudinals coming.

And we are particularly interested in additional funds right now as our longitudinal studies reach maturity.

5. Then, I could add, in particular in relation to the Defence and veterans' families study, we've looked at the transitioning away from Defence when they're still young, in middle career or even early career—only eight or so years on average is as long as most Defence serve—and how that transitioning into the civilian workplace looks and how to best prepare Defence personnel to use those skills they've picked up in Defence, which they may not even identify themselves as significant, in a new career. There's a lot of work that we have done, can do and can still mine out of our various pieces of work we've done in the past, like the longitudinals.

Then, I could add, in relation to the Defence and veterans' families study, we've looked at the transitioning away from Defence when they're still young, in middle career or even early career—only eight or so years on average is as long as most Defence **personnel** serve—**AIFS is researching how the** transitioning into the civilian workplace looks and how to best prepare Defence personnel to use those skills **they have gained in Defence. There is much research that we have completed and still have to do, including mining the data from the past waves in our longitudinal studies.**

Yours sincerely

Dr Sharman Stone
Director
The Australian Institute of Family Studies
Monday, 20 March 2023