

I am writing to you because I am concerned about the number Australian Veterans that have committed suicide (41 this year alone) and the cases of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental illnesses, that both past and present Soldiers are increasingly experiencing after returning home from overseas operations.

I am very concerned that the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) do not recognise how widespread PTSD is amongst the Australian Defence community and very concerned that DVA is simply not doing enough. I have personally seen the devastating impact that PTSD has on diagnosed sufferers and their families. People are suffering unnecessarily.

This is a national health issue and The Federal Government needs to take a more active leadership role. I strongly request the following to be investigated as part of the Senate Enquiry:

- Better education for health professionals about PTSD and how to treat it early before it debilitates people, and more research into this.
- Proper, streamlined, long term treatment made readily available for people suffering from PTSD.
- Acknowledgement of an examination or gap analysis of the Department of Veteran Affairs, to identify any gaps of inconsistency or irregular administration of PTSD.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to your response outlining the action you are going to take. I shall be in contact again soon.

Yours faithfully,

Michael Kucera