

Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee
Adaptive sport programs for Australian Defence Force veterans – 31 March 2023
Answers to questions on notice from the Veterans' Affairs portfolio

Question 1

Outcome: 2.4 Program: Veterans' Community Care and Support

Topic: Department of Veterans' Affairs sports-related grants

(Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Hansard Proof 31 March 2023, p 34)

Senator David Fawcett asked:

Senator FAWCETT: It is a fair question. I'll follow it up. Your submission says:

DVA's Veteran Wellbeing Grants program provides funding to community and ESOs that provide local veterans and families with projects to sustain and enhance health and wellbeing, which may include but are not limited to sporting activities.

That sounds very positive but, while I'm happy to be corrected, I don't believe any of the submissions we've received to this inquiry has said, 'Oh, yes, we got a grant approved by DVA.' Nearly all our oral evidence and written submissions have been, 'We applied and were knocked back,' even from ESOs. I'm aware it's very competitive and there are lots of people applying, but can you give any examples of where DVA has actually approved a grant to a body that is looking at funding for a sporting activity?

Ms Pope: Certainly I can. You're correct that a community organisation that's not an ESO can't apply for a grant in its own right at this stage, although we are open to considering the qualifications of organisations that can apply. That's the current guideline. They can apply in partnership with an ESO. So, if a community organisation wants to work with any ESO, the ESO can make the application together with the community organisation, and that would be eligible for funding. In relation, for example, to equine therapy, we are aware of nine different organisations that have been funded for horseriding activities, in that sort of sporting range. I can provide the details of those, and we could take it on notice for examples.

Senator FAWCETT: If you could take on notice those groups that you have funded—perhaps over the last two years to limit the time frame a little—that would be useful and may dispel some of the sentiment that no funding is allocated.

Ms Pope: My only comment on that would be that it's often people who don't get funding who raise those sorts of issues, and the ones who do are satisfied with it. I did note that the submission from Rugby League—I think New South Wales—commented that it had received a grant under the Veteran Wellbeing Grants program for its Battlefields to Footyfields sports program. So there are certainly some examples.

Senator FAWCETT: Then I stand corrected on my earlier comments, so there was one in there.

Ms Pope: We can certainly on notice provide further lists.

Answer

From 1 July 2020, the Department of Veterans' Affairs has awarded 43 grants totalling \$1.912 million for sports or sports-related activities under Veteran and Community Grants and Supporting Younger Veterans programs.

Refer to Attachment A – “Grants funding for physical activities” for the list of approved grants for sports or sports related activities sine 1 July 2020.

Note the list provided at Attachment A does not include the 2022-23 Veteran Wellbeing Grants funding outcomes that are currently under assessment.